



*Aboriginal news from across Turtle Island and beyond*  
**July 31 – August 7, 2015**

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# Aboriginal Arts & Culture

## Lakehead University hosts Aboriginal learning day

Friday July 31, 2015

About 400 Thunder Bay-area students celebrated National Aboriginal Day by learning about and participating in a variety of Indigenous sports and activities on June 22 at Lakehead University.

“Along with the National Aboriginal Day powwow celebration, we always do an education portion as well for the school groups to educate them on our history and the culture,” says Janine Landry, co-chair of the National Aboriginal Day Committee. “Today (we had) activities that are all Indigenous based, some are sports, some are cultural teachings. It is to educate the students about who we are.”

Landry says the students enjoyed participating in the sports and activities, which included teachings on maple syrup, a faceless dolls project, traditional songs, beading, hand drums as well as legends and stories.

“It’s bringing people together, it’s sharing our knowledge,” says Anne Marie Demerah, a Lakehead University student from Fort William First Nation. “It’s what I was taught — to share our knowledge and to reach out to people and give them that better understanding between each other.”

Demerah taught the students about Fort William’s sugar bush, which is located on Mt. McKay.

“We’ve been (regaining) our knowledge of tapping trees,” Demerah says. “And we’ve been sharing the (maple syrup) with the students. They loved it, they loved the taste.”

The Metis Nation of Ontario (MNO) shared their faceless dolls blanket project on missing and murdered Aboriginal women with the students.

“The MNO and all the offices across Ontario were trying to create enough faceless dolls to represent all the missing and murdered Aboriginal women in Canada,” says Lucy Fowler, MNO’s victim services coordinator. “We are incorporating our men as well because there are a lot of men who are missing and murdered in our communities.”

Pays Plat’s Jake Achneepineskum shared the traditional teachings with the students.

“I’m talking about the eagle feather and singing a couple of songs,” Achneepineskum says. “I’m making everybody feel good, making everyone feel loved because as Anishinabe people that is what we do. We take care of one another; we always like to see people smiling.”

Thunder Bay’s Diana Lindemark helped the students to design a row of beads on a beading loom to represent one of the seven grandfather teachings.

“They are always really excited about beading,” Lindemark says. “They all know the (grandfather) teachings. A lot of them knew (the grandfather teachings) in Ojibwe. And they know the corresponding animals.”

Pic River’s Beatrice Twance-Hynes shared the hand drum teachings with the students, including how she takes care of her hand drum.

“It’s nice to share those teachings with the students,” Trance-Hynes says. “It teaches them about our Aboriginal culture. They all got to participate, they all got to try the drum.”

Constance Lake’s John Ferris shared his Aboriginal education kits with the students. The kits contain all the parts needed to make a miniature drum, including two rawhide deer skins, beads, sinew, a paper ring and imitation birchbark.

“These kits represent how the Aboriginal way of life was originally,” Ferris says. “The students can develop their own design by adding accessories to the drum, like beads and feathers.”

Moffatt Makuto, executive director of Multicultural Association of Northwestern Ontario, says the National Aboriginal Day education gathering was important to create awareness of the Aboriginal culture.

“It is unfortunate that we have to have kids coming out of classes to do this,” Makuto says.

“Down the road it should be part of the curriculum for everyone growing up in Canada.”

Makuto says the Aboriginal culture and teachings are indigenous to Turtle Island. He called for Aboriginal culture and teachings to be taught in all schools across the country.

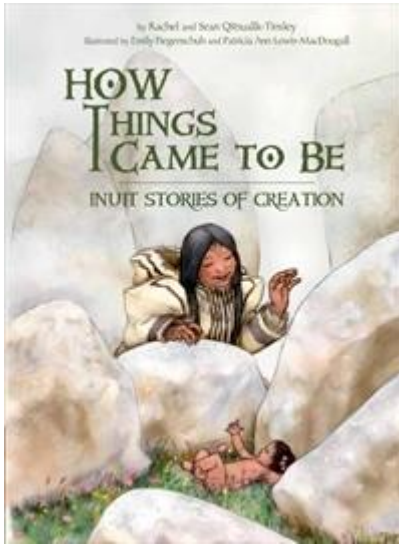
“If I lose my language and culture, I can always go back to Africa to learn it,” Makuto says.

“Everyone else comes from another country, so they can go back to their roots and learn it. But if the Aboriginal culture and language becomes extinct, they lose it.”

**Direct Link:** [http://www.wawataynews.ca/archive/all/2015/7/31/lakehead-university-hosts-aboriginal-learning-day\\_25993](http://www.wawataynews.ca/archive/all/2015/7/31/lakehead-university-hosts-aboriginal-learning-day_25993)

# Inuit culture comes alive

## Four new titles recount some compelling tales



*How Things Came to Be*  
Guelph Mercury

By [Brenda Hoerle](#)

Aug 01, 2015

In the Inuit culture, storytelling has, down through the centuries, been how generations pass along the wisdom and culture of their ancestors.

Neil Christopher has heard plenty of stories since he moved north to start a high school program in Resolute Bay, Nunavut, 16 years ago.

In fact, it was his students who first introduced him to their culture's host of mythical Inuit inhabitants.

His fascination with these stories led to a need to record and preserve them. It resulted in the creation of Inhabit Media Inc., a small publishing company that captures such wonderful tales in book form for all to enjoy.

Its mandate is to promote research about Inuit mythology and the traditional way of life, particularly in the Nunavut area.

Here's a selection of new titles just released by the publishing company, including one by Christopher himself.

"On the Shoulder of a Giant: An Inuit Folktale" (Inhabit Media, \$16.95 hardcover) recounts the story of Inukpak, one Christopher has heard in varying forms.

The giant could stride over the widest rivers and wade through the deepest lakes. His steps are so large he can traverse the Arctic from one end to another in just a few days.

One day, he meets up with a hunter, who is dwarfed by his stature. Inukpak considers him his child, even though he is an adult. The two become friends and travel the Arctic together.

Hence, no matter where you visit in the Arctic, the story of Inukpak is told, often in varying forms.

Christopher lives in Iqaluit, Nunavut. Illustrator Jim Nelson is from Chicago. For ages four to seven.

The origins of the aurora borealis or northern lights are the focus of "Painted Skies" (Inhabit Media, \$16.95 hardcover).

Nova Scotia author Carolyn Mallory tells the story of two young girls, Leslie and Oolipika, who head out to play as darkness falls. Leslie is a newcomer who marvels at the heavy snow.

It is only October.

Suddenly, shimmers of green, pink and yellow dance across the velvety sky, growing ever closer to the girls.

Leslie grows frightened by the visual display, but her playmate explains that the lights actually contain the spirits of their ancestors at play.

To keep them from coming closer, Oolipika teaches Leslie to rub her fingernails across each other, to create a clicking sound.

Feeling much safer, the girls admire the beauty of the aqsarniit, as they are known in Inuktitut.

An epilogue explains the science behind auroras, which are caused when high-speed particles from the sun strike gases in the atmosphere. Since the particles are moving, it looks like lights are dancing across the sky.

Illustrator Amei Zhao's artwork is visually dazzling as it recreates this amazing phenomenon. And did you know that northern lights can also be seen in northern Europe, especially on a moonless night around midnight? For ages five to seven.

Rachel Qitsualik-Tinsley was born in an Arctic wilderness camp. Of Inuit ancestry, she shares her passion for Inuit magic and lore alongside husband Sean, himself a folklorist and fantasist, who specializes in mythology and magic.

In "Lesson for the Wolf" (Inhabit Media, \$16.95 hardcover), the couple share the tale of a young wolf who did not like doing anything his packmates normally loved doing.

He spends his days admiring all the other wildlife on the tundra — from the owl and wolverines to the caribou. He wishes he could be like them and takes actions to make it so, leaving his pack behind. But as he transforms himself with the help of antlers, feathers and fur, he soon learns that what he admires may not really be what he wants in the end.

The illustrator is Alan Cook of London, Ont. For ages five to seven.

In "How Things Came to Be: Inuit Stories of Creation" (Inhabit Media, \$16.95 hardcover), a revised and re-edited version, the Qitsualik-Tinsleys share nine classic Inuit tales from the Qikiqtani region of Nunavut.

From the origins of day and night, the sun and the moon to the creation of such Arctic animals as the caribou, the book is geared for young readers aged six to eight. Illustrators are Emily Fiegenschuh of Washington and Patricia Anne Lewis-MacDougall lives in Stoney Creek, Ont.

Brenda Hoerle reviews children's books for the Waterloo Region Record and the Guelph Mercury. You can reach her at [hoerlebooks@yahoo.ca](mailto:hoerlebooks@yahoo.ca)

**Direct Link:** <http://www.guelphmercury.com/whatson-story/5753079-inuit-culture-comes-alive/>

## **Musique Nomade helps emerging aboriginal artists find their voices**

[Christopher Curtis, Montreal Gazette](#)

Published on: July 31, 2015 | Last Updated: July 31, 2015 6:51 PM EDT



Musician Matthew Vachon will play along with other emerging First Nations artists at Montreal's Place des Festivals in a showcase of the unique and diverse music coming from Quebec's aboriginal communities.  
John Kenney / Montreal Gazette

As far as origin stories go, Matthew Vachon's is straight out of a delta blues song.

After kicking around small towns and an Innu reserve in Quebec's remote Côte-Nord region, he bought a \$50 guitar at a record store in Montmagny about nine years ago.

"It was lonely. I was living away from home, trying to get through college and I didn't have enough money for cable or the Internet so I bought a cheap guitar," Vachon told the Montreal Gazette. "Like I said, there wasn't an Indian in sight down there so it was lonely. That's when I learned to play."

Soon he started to string a few chords together and found he had a knack for writing songs. But it was only last summer, when he recorded a song called Indian Time in his basement, that Vachon's songwriting started to reach a broader audience.

On Sunday, Vachon, 29, will play along with other emerging First Nations artists at Montreal's Place des Festivals in a showcase of the unique and diverse music coming from Quebec's aboriginal communities.

It's difficult to put a label on Vachon's song Indian Time. The guitar has a sort of jazz-influenced bounce to it, but the singing is raspy and almost conversational. He sort of sounds like a jowl-tinged Tom Waits, singing lyrics that Johnny Cash might have written if he were an Innu from the Uashat mak Mani-utenam territory.

He talks about seeing the Lakota Chief Sitting Bull get massacred on television, drinking beer, switching the channel to the hockey game as he eats takeout food and slowly feels himself get fatter. The song shuffles into a sort of aimless, lonely night where Vachon longs for a life that would be more firmly rooted in the ways of his Innu ancestors.

"Christ, it's hard being an Indian in the city," he sings, in French. "I should have just stayed in the bush."

Last year the song caught the ear of a teacher at a travelling film school called Wapikoni Mobile, who happened to be passing through the Innu village. Over the course of a few days, Wapikoni helped Vachon make a music video and eventually put him in touch with people at the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network. Within a few months, Vachon found himself performing on television.

“Things started going really fast after that,” said Vachon, who works as a stage technician. “I think the song resonated with people, it’s about struggling with your identity, living between two worlds and a lot of us deal with that.”

Ahead of Sunday’s free show in Montreal, Vachon recorded a new song last week with Musique Nomade, a sister organization of Wapikoni’s that travels to remote First Nations to help emerging artists get established. Through a series of grants and private donations, Musique Nomade technicians drive to four aboriginal communities each summer and stay for two weeks at a time — recording music from as many as 10 artists per stop.

François Lalonde’s been involved with the project for four years and says the recording process can be something of an adventure. Working out of a rented van, Lalonde packs the vehicle with soundboards, wires, microphones and assorted sound gear before leaving on a trip that could take him deep into the province’s wilderness.

“You drive eight, nine, 10 hours and then you set up wherever you can,” said Lalonde, a veteran producer who’s worked with Jean Leloup and other Quebec acts. “We’ve recorded in chapels, offices, wherever our stuff can fit. It’s a lot of fun but basically for two weeks we’re just in this homemade studio, recording one act after another.”

The songs collected by Lalonde and other Nomade technicians run the gamut of musical styles. Esther Pennell picks at her banjo and sings in a tone that is both playful and evocative of the identity issues so many First Nations women face — one lyric goes, “Some say my blood’s not red enough, some say my skin’s too bright and I might add a little salt to the batter but it still turns out all right.”

At the other end of the spectrum, someone like DJ XS7 weaves synth beats with traditional First Nations singing techniques and newsreel audio about the Idle No More protest movement. Regardless of the genre, the songs all seem to lean heavily on issues like First Nations poverty, identity, culture and the lingering threat of assimilation.

“I think what’s impressive is that there’s so much talent out there from people who maybe don’t have the means to get their music to a wider audience,” said Karine Gravel, Musique Nomade’s coordinator. “We’re not trying to be a record label, we’re not trying to make money off these people. We help them record demos, we try to get them showcases and just lend them a hand wherever we can.”

Lalonde says each stop is a gruelling two-week marathon of layering tracks, overdubs and getting arrangements just right.



“But it’s so rewarding, people are sharing something very emotional, very close to them and sometimes it brings them to tears,” he said. “People take us and squeeze us, they hold us in their arms when they hear themselves on a record for the first time. It’s a wonderful experience but that’s music, man.

“These people they have something to say, they have a voice and a perspective that needs to be heard,” Lalonde continued. “We live alongside them but we know almost nothing about them. But most importantly, they’re really good musicians and people will have a great time if they go out and see them play.”

*The fourth annual Show de la Musique Nomade takes place Sunday at 6:30 p.m. at Place des Festivals.*

**Direct Link:** <http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/musique-nomade-helps-emerging-aboriginal-artists-find-their-voices>

## **Album aims to give indigenous trailblazers overdue recognition**

Laura Beeston

The Globe and Mail

Published Sunday, Aug. 02, 2015 12:00PM EDT

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The success of [Native North America \(Vol. 1\)](#), a seminal compilation of nearly lost aboriginal folk, rock and country music from 1966-85, is being celebrated Aug. 5 at Winnipeg’s Plug In Institute of Contemporary Art. Album curator Kevin Howes, a Vancouver-based record archeologist, curator and DJ renowned for uncovering undocumented Canadian music history, is taking part in a discussion alongside indigenous singer-songwriter Shingoose. The event will also feature screenings of the documentaries *The Paradox of Norval Morrisseau* and *The Other Side of the Ledger*, the latter a critical examination of Hudson’s Bay Co.’s treatment of aboriginal peoples. “I think it will symbolically be an interesting and dynamic evening,” Howes says, noting that it’s taking place on the roof of the gallery, which has a direct view of HBC’s flagship store on Portage Avenue. “The relevancy of the messages in these songs, with their substance, depth, culture and soul [are] still very timely today,” he continues. “It’s resonating with people because so little has changed ... and because there is a desire to appreciate, preserve and share this culture.” The compilation, issued by Seattle’s Light in the Attic Records, was long-listed for the [2015 Polaris Prize](#) and aims to give Canada’s indigenous trailblazers some long-overdue recognition. It has proved popular – the album is going through its second print run.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/music/album-aims-to-give-indigenous-trailblazers-overdue-recognition/article25803130/>

## How artists are using aboriginal beadwork to tell contemporary stories

**More than 50 beadwork pieces from around the globe will be on display at Montreal's Ashukan centre**

By Rebecca Ugolini, [CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 03, 2015 12:34 PM ET Last Updated: Aug 03, 2015 12:54 PM ET



Montreal-based Ojibwe man and artist Nico Williams created this beaded ball-gag for his piece called "Silenced No More." Williams says the piece communicates what he feels is the silencing of Aboriginal peoples by the Canadian government. (Nico Williams)

A new beadwork exhibit at the Ashukan cultural centre in Montreal's Old Port is lending a contemporary voice to the aboriginal story-telling method known as Wampum.

[Beadwork: Visions of Peace/Teiotiokwenhahton](#) brings together more than 50 pieces of beaded artwork from artists all around the world.

CBC spoke with the exhibit's organizer and [Native Immigrant collective](#) founder, Carolina Echeverria, and an Ojibwe artist who is participating in the exhibit, Nico Williams, to find out more.

**Beadwork: Visions of Peace exhibit explores First Nations story-telling through Wampum**10:19

**CBC:** Carolina Echeverria, you asked artists participating in the Beadwork exhibit to draw inspiration from the aboriginal story-telling method called Wampum. What is Wampum?

**Carolina Echeverria:** Wampum is a method that Native people have used to record things like peace treaties, which took white people thousands of pages to write. First Nations people condensed it all into one beaded image. The flip side is that Canadians often did not respect the treaties, because they said they were not written. But a wampum is in fact a written record.

**CBC: You are not aboriginal. What made you interested in Wampum and want to organize this exhibit?**

**CE:** I'm an immigrant to Montreal from Chile. At first I thought I was coming to Canada, but then I discovered, no, I'm actually in Quebec. Then I discovered that I wasn't in Quebec — I was on Mohawk territory. I wanted to learn more about how to live in this land, and I support Idle No More. I believe that people need to learn about the culture from aboriginal people, not from the colonizers.



Detail from beadwork by Ojibwe artist Nico Williams. (Nico Williams)

**CBC: Nico Williams, you are Ojibwe and have contributed several beaded artworks to the exhibit. When did you first learn to bead?**

**Nico Williams:** I had started learning basic beadloom work when I was younger, but recently fell into Peyote beadwork. The Ojibwe people are known for beading, so it's coming naturally to me right now — it's exploding. I think viewers will find the work really exciting. It's coming from me, but I don't really understand where it's all coming from.

**CBC: One of your pieces is called "Silenced No More." It's a beaded ball-gag with flower patterns on the strap. What were you trying to express with that piece?**

**NW:** It focuses on how the government wants to keep aboriginal artwork, and they like to preserve it, but don't want to hear what people have to say. They usually want to silence us or keep who we are separate from our art. They want our art but don't want to care about the people.

**CBC: You've also contributed a 3D beaded pyramid to the exhibit. It's a little bit more light-hearted, but still uses beadwork to tell people a little bit about you. What's that one like?**

**NW:** I love using colour and patterns, so on one side of the triangle there's doughnuts, because in St-Henri where I live there's one shop that makes beautiful gourmet doughnuts. On one side there's aliens, from watching Netflix, and on the other side there are little cacti because I want to travel to New Mexico one day — so it's very contemporary.

**CBC: Carolina Echeverria, tell us about some of the talks and events organized over the course of the exhibit.**

**CE:** There's the Native Immigrant dressmaking activity, where members of the public can bring an object that represents their family's immigration story, and sew it onto a dress. We will display the robes from Oka Crisis lawyer Richard Corriveau, which have beadwork on them as well. There will also be conversations circles where we'll cover topics like education, Mohawk language, what the future looks like, and the 25th anniversary of the Oka Crisis.

**Beadwork: Visions of Peace/Teiotiokwenhahton runs August 5th-15th at the Ashukan Cultural Centre in the Old Port, 431, Place Jacques-Cartier; admission is free. For more: [visit the exhibit's Facebook page](#).**

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/how-artists-are-using-aboriginal-beadwork-to-tell-contemporary-stories-1.3177772>

## First Nations, Parks Canada celebrate Fundy National Park

**Natural and cultural heritage of Fundy National Park part of celebration**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 03, 2015 8:14 AM AT Last Updated: Aug 03, 2015 8:14 AM AT



The Fundy National Park celebration included displays of First Nations culture. (Shane Fowler/CBC)

This weekend marked the 65th anniversary of New Brunswick's Fundy National Park.

To celebrate, Parks Canada has partnered with some members of the community whose roots go back thousands of years before the park's inception.

"Where we are, the Fundy park is part of the traditional land of the Wabanaki people," said Cecelia Brooks of the Wabanaki confederacy.

"Wabanaki means people of the dawn so that would be comprised of Mi'kmaq, the Maliseet, the Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, it was a large confederacy."

Dance, song, food and art were all a part of the celebration, along with an open house where tourists were encouraged to speak with First Nations people about the history of the land.

"It's just about looking for ways to work together as Parks Canada and the Assembly of First Nations chiefs to see how we can showcase Canada's cultural heritage and natural heritage," said Parks Canada manager Andrew Fry.

Next year the park is hoping to host a full powwow.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/first-nations-parks-canada-celebrate-fundy-national-park-1.3177603>

## How an escape from Nazis led to new world of First Nations songs

Richard Watts / Times Colonist  
August 6, 2015 12:05 AM



Viennese music scholar Ida Halpern was one of the first musicologists to record and catalogue First Nations songs. Ida Halpern, J-00527, courtesy of the Royal B.C.

It took an Austrian Jew, fleeing the Nazis and the Japanese army, to reveal to the world the musical treasure of British Columbia First Nations.

Ida Halpern, a Viennese music scholar who studied the cultural contexts of European folk music and lyrics, arrived in Vancouver with her husband, Georg, in 1939, the year after Nazi Germany annexed Austria.

In 1947, she became one of the first musicologists to interview native elders and chiefs to record and catalogue songs of the Kwakwaka'wakw, Nuuchah-Nulth, Tlingit, Haida and Coast Salish peoples.

“Begin with an open mind and the highest respect for this unique, complex musical culture,” Halpern later wrote of her approach. “Find the best way to understand this important music.”

Halpern's work is now accessible in digital form at the B.C. Archives, made available by the Royal B.C. Museum.

Called Access to Memory, or AtoM, her work is available for archivists, scholars and the public; it includes writings, recorded interviews and 342 of Halpern's music recordings.

Halpern began to learn about the music by establishing relationships with elders and chiefs. She spent years interviewing and staying at the homes of elders and chiefs, mostly on Vancouver Island. They were enthusiastic at the notion their songs would be recorded and preserved.

While anthropologists had labelled as “nonsense” some words in First Nations songs, Halpern was among the first to document the complex associations and protocol between the music and the important potlatch ceremonies.

For example, she realized the importance of certain words and sounds; “Ga, Ga, Ga” in a raven song, for example, depicted the bird's call. In songs about paddling canoes, she found a connection between the rhythms of the music and the action being described in the lyrics.

Halpern, who was born in Austria in 1910, died in Vancouver in 1987.

Her approach to studying West Coast aboriginal songs by examining cultural contexts was inspired by the professors she met while enrolled in the Musicological Institute of the University of Vienna in 1929.

After she and Georg married in 1936, they briefly lived in Italy before returning to Vienna. In 1938 — the year Halpern gave her dissertation at the university — Nazi Germany annexed Austria. That same year, the Halperns fled to Shanghai, where Halpern was hired as a professor of musicology. But with signs the Japanese army was about to arrive, the couple fled to Vancouver in 1939.

Halpern's parents stayed in Austria and were never heard from again, despite extensive post-war searches.

In Vancouver, Halpern purchased a piano and began giving lessons, quickly establishing herself in the city's music community.

By 1942, Halpern was teaching the first music classes at the University of B.C. By 1948, she had founded the Vancouver Friends of Chamber Music. She would eventually serve as director of the Vancouver Metropolitan Opera and the Vancouver Symphony, and write a music column for The Province.

Raymond Frogner, an archivist with B.C. Archives, said only a handful of Halpern's recordings are available online because many are associated with First Nations families and ceremonies. To avoid cultural offence or invasion of privacy, the recordings can only be heard in private by appointment through B.C. Archives. No re-recordings are permitted.

Frogner said he has long admired Halpern's work as a researcher who never lost sight of her respect and admiration for First Nations people, their culture and music.

"She recognized their music as something that is globally unique," he said.

The music had been looked at before, but she took it as a serious cultural expression and something that was worth studying musically."

- See more at: <http://www.timescolonist.com/news/local/how-an-escape-from-nazis-led-to-new-world-of-first-nations-songs-1.2022435#sthash.rQmuU7Jm.dpuf>

## **Métis artist Christi Belcourt inspires Valentino fashion line**

ROBERT EVERETT-GREEN

The Globe and Mail

Published Tuesday, Aug. 04, 2015 9:13AM EDT

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Michif artist Christi Belcourt's most recent project was a birch-bark canoe, which she helped stitch up with spruce roots this week at Chippewa of the Thames First Nation in southwestern Ontario. Spruce root is about as far as you can get from the fine threads used at the Italian fashion house of Valentino, which recently revealed a line of haute couture designs based on a Belcourt painting owned by the National Gallery of Canada.

The canoe, a project of the Onaman Collective, is right in line with Belcourt's work in community-based social arts, which are meant to help indigenous youth recover



traditional cultural practices. Collaborating with Valentino was so far out of her usual range of activity that she deleted the company's first e-mails to her, thinking they were spam.

"The subject line was 'We're contacting you from Milan, Italy,' so I didn't respond," she said, laughing down the phone line from her mother's house near Picton, Ont. "It took them several tries to get me to pay attention."



Christi Belcourt's painting, *Water Song*, which Valentino's Francesco Bova turned into fabric samples. (Christi Belcourt)

Belcourt, who lives just north of Manitoulin Island, became an artist pretty much within her Ontario indigenous community, staying away from art colleges and even galleries when she was getting started. Her art has always had a strong spirit of indigenous identity and activism, which she shares with her father Tony Belcourt, a Michif leader and former head of the Métis Nation of Ontario.

Somehow, Valentino designers Maria Grazia Chiuri and Pierpaolo Piccioli became aware of Belcourt's paintings, which are based on Michif beading traditions and floral patterns. Those must have appealed to the designers' demonstrated taste for vibrant floral patterns.

After some long-distance discussion about paintings and fabrics, Valentino fabric designer Francesco Bova flew from Milan to Toronto with cloth samples based on Belcourt's painting, *Water Song*. She took him to the Art Gallery of Ontario, where her painting *The Wisdom of the Universe* recently placed No. 1 in a People's Choice poll, ahead of works by Alex Colville, Emily Carr and Paterson Ewen. Over tea, Bova showed Belcourt his samples, which included one printed fabric and two that were fully embroidered.

"My reponse was, 'I would like several yards of these materials right away, so I can begin sewing with them,'" she said. "They were simply gorgeous."



*Water Song* is a four-metre-long work painted in many small dots of colour on a black background. That made for some technical challenges when the scale of the design was reduced to something that would work on a skirt or a jacket. Some dots in the printed sample had a tendency to vanish into the black, she said, not through a fault in the transfer but in the act of perception. Bova was very receptive to her notes, she said, but she would never have met with him if his company had not stood up to her scrutiny of its social and environmental practices.

“I needed to know if they had ever been accused of cultural appropriation, if they had ever had models walk down the runway in feathers or headdresses,” she said. “I needed to find out what their environmental track record was. *Water Song* is all about the sacredness of water, and our responsibility to the water and the earth. It would go against everything I believe in to be involved with a company that was abusive to the environment and to the human beings from whom they source materials.”

Valentino used a range of fabrics for its Belcourt outfits, some solid and some sheer, with her dazzling bead-like florals arrayed across full-length dresses, jackets, mid-length and shorts skirts and even a halter top. The collection is serious yet playful, and undoubtedly glamorous.

“I couldn’t have dreamed of anything better,” she said. “There was nothing for me to say but that I loved them.” Her experience with Valentino was a model of respectful collaboration, she said, quite unlike the insensitive rip-off of indigenous cultures perpetrated last spring by Canadian designers Dean and Dan Caten of Dsquared2, whose “dsquaw” line earned them a drubbing in social and mainstream media.

Another set of Belcourt designs have been seen numerous times on television during the recent Pan Am games, as athletes accepted medals designed by her for the Royal Canadian Mint. That project included many visual elements required by the games medal committee, though a watery alloy effect in the coins’ production echoes a painting she did years ago – “of the surface of water, when you’re sitting a boat and looking at the reflections.”

Belcourt’s biggest and longest collaboration, however, remains the ongoing touring exhibition *Walking With Our Sisters* (WWOS), which she initiated in 2013 as a way of honouring missing and murdered indigenous women. She put out a call for pairs of decorated moccasin vamps, with the ambition of presenting one for each of the women known to have disappeared in recent decades. The collection now numbers 1,820 pairs, including some that people have brought to the 11 iterations the exhibition has had so far.

“It’s not really an art exhibit, it’s a memorial,” she said. “Communities are holding a ceremony at each stop for the purpose of honouring the women’s lives and acknowledging what the families are going through. The response has been overwhelming, and it just keeps going.”

Each presentation requires a year of planning and fundraising by a local organizing committee, which also recruits up to 400 volunteers and is responsible for personally transporting the vamps and a growing number of sacred objects to the next location on the route. After the exhibition's next stop at the K'omoks Band Hall in Comox, B.C. (July 31 to Aug. 15), for example, someone from the local committee will drive the whole collection to Ottawa in a large van for a display at Gallery 101 that begins Sept. 25. Eleven more stops are on the schedule before the tour ends in Sept. 2019 in Batoche, Sask.

If WWOS is about treating a wound that will not heal, the Chippewa canoe-building project is more about planting new seeds for the regrowth of cultural practices that were lost or suppressed. That's how Belcourt describes all the projects of the Onaman Collective, which also include collaborative mural paintings and Anishinaabe language immersion weekends.

"I don't think that Canadians are quite aware that there's a really big movement of resurgence and reclamation all across the country," she said. "It's beautiful to witness and be part of, to see people practice the ceremonies and put the pieces back together."

There are a lot of pieces, for all the indigenous nations in this country. And sometimes what you need most to put a few of those pieces together is a length of spruce root.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/arts/art-and-architecture/metis-artist-christi-belcourt-inspires-valentino-fashion-line/article25824113/>

## **Aboriginal Business & Finance**

### **Liard First Nation served court papers by federal government**

### **Yukon First Nation 'failed to, or refused to' publish salaries of chief and council**

By Philippe Morin, [CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 03, 2015 4:30 AM CT Last Updated: Aug 03, 2015 4:30 AM CT



The LFN has been under third-party management since August of 2014. The First Nations' federally-allocated finances are being distributed by a B.C. company as part of a plan to repay more than \$700,000 in debts. (Philippe Morin/CBC)

The federal government has filed a court order against Yukon's Liard First Nation.

The order seeks to enforce the First Nations Financial Transparency Act.

On May 7, RCMP in Watson Lake delivered court papers to Liard First Nation councillor Cindy Porter.

The department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada wants the Federal Court to force the Liard First Nation to publish financial information. This includes the salaries of Chief and Council.

A notice of application says the Liard First Nation has "failed to, or refused to, publish all of the documents" required by the act.

## Similar cases across Canada



Liard First Nation Chief Daniel Morris is shown in Ottawa during an appearance alongside the Council of Yukon First Nations in 2014. (CBC)

The Liard First Nation isn't the only First Nation to be served similar papers.

According to AANDC, the First Nations Financial Transparency Act affects 582 First Nations in Canada.

Eleven First Nations have not published the required financial information.

The Liard First Nation is the only First Nation in Yukon, NWT and Nunavut not to comply with the act.

## **LFN 'leaving members in the dark' says Valcourt**

Court papers filed in Yukon cite "repeated demands" from AANDC that the Liard First Nation publish salaries.

The seeking of a court order comes a full year after passage of the act.

Last March, the office of Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt sent what it called a "formal letter" to the LFN demanding it meet the act's requirements.

At that time, Valcourt wrote that LFN leadership "have not fulfilled the requirements of the act, nor provided the government with an action plan, thus leaving their members in the dark about how band revenues are spent."

According to AANDC's Emily Hillstrom, the government then filed a notice of application with the Federal Court.

## **Consequences unclear**

Failure to comply with any court order can lead to charges of contempt of court.

According to the act, funds may be also withheld from First Nations which do not publish required information.

In the case of the Liard First Nation, however, it's unclear what funds the federal government could withhold.

The First Nation has been under third-party management since August of 2014. As part of the arrangement, "non-essential services" have already been cut.

The Liard First Nations' federally-allocated finances are being distributed by a B.C. company as part of a plan to repay more than \$700,000 in debts.

According to AANDC, five First Nations of the eleven being pursued are under third-party management.

"Liard First Nation's Third-Party Management status will not affect the litigation related the First Nations Financial Transparency Act," Hillstrom wrote in an email response to CBC.

## **Kaska members seek information**

In the community of Watson Lake, members of the LFN have also been calling for Chief and Council to publish information on spending and salaries.

Liard First Nation member Alfred Chief is part of a political splinter group called Kaska Concerned About Land Protection and Good Government.

"There have been no council meetings. They don't even have an office," Chief says of the current Liard First Nation leaders.

Meanwhile, members of the community say two of four LFN councilors have stepped down in recent weeks. CBC has been unable to reach those councillors to confirm.

"We have no idea what's going on," Chief says.

AANDC and Minister Bernard Valcourt's office have declined requests for on-camera interviews.

Liard First Nation Chief Daniel Morris and councillors have not returned calls from the CBC.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/liard-first-nation-served-court-papers-by-federal-government-1.3176492>

## **Conservatives 'throw stones in a glass house' on First Nations transparency, chief says**

**'It's like a boomerang, it's going to come back to them,' Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day says**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 05, 2015 7:21 AM ET Last Updated: Aug 05, 2015 10:51 AM ET



Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day says First Nations in the province are resisting 'extremely inconsistent and inhumane policies of the federal government'. (submitted by Anishinabek Nation)

The majority of First Nations in Ontario did not meet last week's deadline for filing their financial statements, according to the federal government's website.

Under the First Nations Financial Transparency Act, First Nations have to submit to the Canadian government their audited financial statements for the past fiscal year, including the salaries and expenses of their chiefs and councillors.

Last year, the first year the law was in effect, 98 per cent of First Nations complied. But this year, many communities are choosing to resist, according to Ontario Regional Chief Isadore Day.

"Those bands protesting against the federal government and not producing their financial information should be acknowledged for their efforts, not for withholding information, but resisting the extremely inconsistent and inhumane policies of the federal government," Day said.

Day said the Conservatives "live in a glass house" when it comes to accusing First Nations of not being financially accountable and transparent.

## **'Double standard'**

"The number of accountability shortfalls at the hands of the Harper Conservatives is staggering," he said. "Lack of lawful consultation, squandering over \$1 billion of First Nation allocations, spending more money to fight First Nations in the courts — that's the big double standard story of the decade."

Aboriginal Affairs Minister Bernard Valcourt said funding for non-essential services will be withheld from First Nations that don't file their financial audits, beginning Sept. 1.

"Let me be clear, our government will take action, according to the provisions of the law, against First Nation governments that do not follow the law," Valcourt said in a written statement last week.

Both the NDP and Liberals say, if elected, they would review and potentially repeal the First Nations Financial Transparency Act.

Day says he's not concerned that First Nations accountability will get kicked around as a federal election football.

"It's like a boomerang," he said. "It's going to come back to [the Conservatives] and its going to do more damage to them than it is First Nations, because clearly at the end of the day we are accountable to our community members."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/conservatives-throw-stones-in-a-glass-house-on-first-nations-transparency-chief-says-1.3179364>

## Aboriginal Community Development

### Pow Wow honours head of St. Albert treatment centre

By [Kevin Maimann](#), *Edmonton Sun*

First posted: Saturday, August 01, 2015 04:59 PM MDT | Updated: Saturday, August 01, 2015 05:05 PM MDT



Poundmaker's Lodge Treatment Centres executive director Brad Cardinal was honoured during a Pow Wow in St. Albert Saturday afternoon. KEVIN MAIMANN/EDMONTON SUN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Aboriginal communities honoured the executive director of a St. Albert-based addictions treatment centre Saturday.

Brad Cardinal of the Poundmaker Lodge Treatment Centres Society was honoured by elders, soldiers and dignitaries during a traditional Pow Wow.

“I feel very humbled,” Cardinal said.

First Nations from across Alberta were represented at the ceremony, which continues Sunday afternoon at Poundmaker’s Lodge in St. Albert.

The treatment centre society has provided addiction treatment services to aboriginal populations for more than 30 years.

Its current programming includes a 42-day adult residential treatment program, a 90-day treatment program for young adults, and the Iskwew Healing Lodge for women who require ongoing support.

Poundmaker works with roughly 1,300 inpatient clients each year, and also runs an outpatient service in downtown Edmonton.

“Getting people healthy and sober keeps them out of emergency rooms, it keeps them out of hospital beds, it gets them to a better place in their lives, and it helps them to become responsible Albertans,” Cardinal said. “That’s what we’re striving for.”

He said engaging clients through cultural ceremonies like this weekend’s events – which include dancing, singing and food – improve their outcomes.

“It’s the heart of aboriginal people. It’s very important that we stay focused on where we come from,” Cardinal said. “It’s one of the things that the elders teach us, to always look back and remember where you’ve come from. Because it’s in our history that we are able to learn, recover and become healthy again.”

Poundmaker’s Lodge was named after Chief Poundmaker of Saskatchewan, a prominent leader of the Treaty 6 territory.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.edmontonsun.com/2015/08/01/pow-wow-honours-head-of-st-albert-treatment-centre>

## **Nunavut firefighters aim for Aboriginal Firefighters Association Competition**

**'I want to help community, I want to help people,' says Jolie Enoogoo from Pond Inlet**



By Sima Sahar Zerehi, [for CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 06, 2015 7:36 AM CT Last Updated: Aug 06, 2015 7:36 AM CT



'I want to help community, I want to help people,' says Jolie Enoogoo, a firefighter from Pond Inlet, who has been a member of the Nunavut team for the past four years. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

Twenty firefighters from communities across Nunavut are in Iqaluit this week, vying for a spot at the annual national Aboriginal Firefighters Association Competition.

For the trials, the firefighters wear fire suits and helmets. Organized in groups of five, they're asked to perform drills where they roll and unroll fire hoses and spray targets with a water stream. It's all part of their job of saving lives, but this week it's also about making the team. Only eight will head to the national competition in Rama, Ontario on August 15.

"In the fire service it's about teamwork and working together all the time," says Jerry Anilniliak, the Fire Marshall Trainee. "That really shows at the nationals."

For young firefighters, the competition is a chance to learn new skills.

"Learning more stuff about firefighting," is the main goal, says Mark Tigumiar a firefighter from Naujaat who's only been on the job for six months. He says he wants to know more "about what to do and what not to do."



Only eight will head to the national competition in Rama, Ontario on August 15. (Sima Sahar Zerehi/CBC)

For other firefighters these games are an opportunity to live out childhood dreams.

"When I was a little kid I just loved firefighters, just the way I am I guess," says Kyle Amautinuak, a firefighter from Kugaaruk. "Like watching them how the firefighters go into a burning building and save other people's lives and try to save their houses and what not."

It's all fun and games now, but what these guys learn for the competition today could help save lives tomorrow.

"I want to help community, I want to help people," says Jolie Enoogoo, a firefighter from Pond Inlet, who has been a member of the Nunavut team for the past four years. Enoogoo even holds a record for using the breathing apparatus at the nationals: his time is 37 seconds.

The team hopes for gold in Ontario, but there is one prize that they are almost guaranteed to win. For the past seven out of nine years, Nunavut took home the prize for the most sportsmanlike team. It's quite the feat for a group that only has one week to learn to work together.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/nunavut-firefighters-aim-for-aboriginal-firefighters-association-competition-1.3181202>

## Two new women's shelters to be built in Eeyou Istchee

**'We are happy that this is coming into fruition, where women can have a safe place'**

By Christopher Herodier, Jaime Little, [CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 05, 2015 4:20 PM CT  
Last Updated: Aug 05, 2015 4:20 PM CT



From left: CWEIA President Virginia Wabano, Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come, Cree Health Board Chairperson Bella M. Petawabano, Donny Nichols of the Cree Nation Government's Justice Department at the signing of the agreement to build two new women's shelters in Cree territory. (Twitter)

Two new women's shelters will be built in Eeyou Istchee, the Cree territory in northern Québec.

Grand Chief Matthew Coon Come and Cree Health Board Chairperson Bella Moses Petawabano signed an agreement for the construction of the shelters at this week's annual general assembly of the Cree Nation Government in Oujé-Bougoumou, northern Québec.

"We are happy that this is coming into fruition, where women can have a safe place for themselves and their children," said Virginia Wabano, president of the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association.

"But we look at this as only a temporary measure where we can all grow as a nation, and one day, the shelters may not be needed."

Each facility will have 18 beds, offering rooms as well as counselling and support services for women and their children escaping domestic abuse.



Design plans for the new shelters were posted on Facebook by Virginia Wabano, president of the Cree Women of Eeyou Istchee Association. (Virginia Wabano/Facebook)

Wabano says construction will start immediately.

The shelters will be built in Waskaganish and Waswanipi, each with a population of about 2,000. The shelters will also serve smaller surrounding communities.

The Waskaganish shelter will primarily serve the coastal Cree communities (Whapmagoostui, Chisasibi, Wemindji, Waskaganish, Eastmain) while the Waswanipi shelter will serve inland communities (Waswanipi, Oujé-Bougoumou, Mistissini and Nemaska).

The shelters are expected to open in the spring of 2016

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/two-new-women-s-shelters-to-be-built-in-eyyou-istchee-1.3180777>

# Aboriginal Crime, Justice & Law Enforcement

## Former Vancouver police chief jumps into business world

**Jim Chu's first job is working with Metro First Nations on two major projects for the Aquilini group**

By Kim Bolan, Vancouver Sun July 31, 2015



Former Vancouver police chief Jim Chu has joined the Vancouver-based Aquilini group as a vice-president.

Former Vancouver police chief Jim Chu has taken on a new role as vice-president of special projects and partnerships for the Aquilini Investment Group.

Chu, 55, will begin his new job on Aug. 4 and will focus on the company's relationships with First Nations and other partners on a number of large development projects.

David Negrin, president of Aquilini Development and Construction Inc., said Chu was a natural choice because of the leadership he showed as the city's top cop over the last eight years.

"It's exciting. It's great," Negrin said of Chu joining the company. "He's outgoing and very respected and we knew he would be a good fit for our company. We really want him to handle a lot of the relationships, make sure the partners we have are happy with the work that we are going forward with."

Negrin said he was impressed with the way Chu led the Vancouver Police Department and dealt with issues in the city like the 2011 Stanley Cup Riots.

“My feeling was that he’s someone that’s trusted in the community — that was really important to me and our company,” said Negrin. “It is also about the relationships he’s formed with government.”

Chu retired from the VPD in May after 36 years on the force. He told The Sun Thursday that he’s excited about the new opportunity.

“It’s something I didn’t expect, although the business world did always interest me,” Chu said. “My degrees are in business. And as police chief, I always thought it was important as an organization we were efficient and we made good use of the funds we were allocated.”

There was speculation Chu would run for political office after retiring. But he said Thursday that’s not in the cards.

“I have made a long-term commitment to the Aquilini Investment Group and the projects that I’m going to be working on are longer term. So I won’t be running,” he said.

Negrin said Chu would work with the Tsleil-Waututh, Musqueam and Squamish Nations on a development on the former liquor distribution branch lands the First Nations own in Vancouver, and with the Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh on a project on their Willingdon lands in Burnaby, which is at the rezoning phase.

Chu said he tried to reach out to First Nations communities in Vancouver in his tenure as chief.

“In the VPD, I felt that the relationship with the First Nations community got better in my time,” he said.

He noted that the force got cooperation from First Nations leaders when trying to investigate violent predators in the Downtown Eastside who were targeting vulnerable drug addicts.

“It took some convincing to get the leaders of the First Nations community, especially the leadership of the Women’s Memorial March, to come stand with us and to say that the VPD is very serious about going after predators and that witnesses and victims should come forward,” Chu said.

“I have always felt that I had strengths in terms of working with various communities including communities that perhaps needed a bit of winning over and I also feel really excited about working with some of the partners that the Aquilini family already has.”

While Chu is headed in a new direction, he hasn’t left the world of policing entirely.

“I’m still remaining as a director of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police as past-president so that keeps me with a foot in the door of policing,” he said.

“I still get asked for my opinion and with national issues and with the Canadian chiefs, I get to weigh in. But locally, I am trying to stay clear so the new chief can define his own leadership.”

Read more:

<http://www.vancouversun.com/sports/Former+Vancouver+police+chief+jumps+into+business+world/11256345/story.html#ixzz3hsgUgKmm>

## **Funding Announced to Support Aboriginal Women Affected by Domestic Violence**

**August 6, 2015 by [Cassandra Jeffery](#)**

A total of \$1.5 million in provincial funding is expected to increase services and supports throughout British Columbia for the Aboriginal women, men, and children who are affected by domestic violence.



Distributed over a two year period, the province will work with a partnership table of government, non-government, and Aboriginal representatives to develop a funding criteria. A primary focus will be on increasing services and supports in rural and remote communities.

The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres will then distribute the confirmed funding to partner agencies.



“The Province made an important funding announcement today, and our council is pleased to continue to provide advice and collaboration with partners on this very critical priority – to address and prevent all forms of violence against Aboriginal women and girls so they can achieve their full potential,” said Chastity Davis, chair of the Minister’s Advisory Council on Aboriginal Women.

According to the province, Aboriginal women are nearly three times more likely to be victims of intimate partner violence than non-Aboriginal women.

In 2013, there were 12,359 police-reported victims of intimate partner violence throughout the province.

The funding announcement is part of the \$5.5 million Provincial Domestic Violence Plan.

**Direct Link:**

[https://www.kelownanow.com/watercooler/news/news/Provincial/15/08/06/Funding\\_Announced\\_to\\_Support\\_Aboriginal\\_Women\\_Affected\\_by\\_Domestic\\_Violence](https://www.kelownanow.com/watercooler/news/news/Provincial/15/08/06/Funding_Announced_to_Support_Aboriginal_Women_Affected_by_Domestic_Violence)

## **Thunder Bay police 'roughed me up', First Nations man says**

**Elijah Sugarhead says arrest for 'no reason' led to broken glasses, blood and bruises**

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 06, 2015 6:00 AM ET Last Updated: Aug 06, 2015 2:16 PM ET



Elijah Sugarhead, 29, says Thunder Bay police caused the bruises on his face, broke his glasses and nearly broke his nose. (Jody Porter/CBC)

A First Nations man says he was tackled, kneed in the head and insulted with racial slurs by Thunder Bay police officers after he refused to speak to them.

Elijah Sugarhead said he left a bar on the city's south side around 2:30 a.m. on July 26 and was walking on St. Paul Street when two officers in an unmarked police car pulled up beside him and asked him to stop.

The 29-year-old, originally from Nibinamik First Nation, said there was no reason for police to approach him and he was immediately suspicious about racial profiling.

"I said 'no. Is it because I'm Native?'" Sugarhead said. Then an officer got out of the car and "I freaked out and ran towards the public."

Sugarhead said he wanted to run to a place where there were people who would witness the interaction, and also where there was grass, instead of pavement, to fall on in case things turned violent.

"I found a soft ground place and that's where I stopped and they just put me down and roughed me up," he said. "They were aiming for my head mainly. One of the officer's knees were at the back of my head and I was hurt."

## Running common response

Running from police is very common response, according to a criminologist who specializes in the policing of minority communities.



Akwasi Owusu-Bempah is a criminologist and professor at Indiana University who studies race, inequality, justice and policing. (Akwasi Owusu-Bempah/Twitter)

The instinct to flee is related to something called "stereotype threat", Indiana University professor Akwasi Owusu-Bempah said.

People of colour, particularly blacks and aboriginals know that they are stereotyped as criminals, especially by police, he said.

"So, an officer is approaching me. I know that he might be targeting me because he thinks I'm a criminal. I get nervous and then, exactly like this situation, I run away,



confirming the officer's suspicion that there's something wrong there even though there's nothing wrong," Owusu-Bempah said.

The onus is on police to be sensitive to the stereotypes and the position of the people they are dealing with, he said.

## **'Scared for my life'**

Sugarhead said his ordeal didn't end on the street.

He said he was cuffed behind the back and put in the police car where he said he was subject to racial slurs, told to go back to the rez and one officer said he wished Sugarhead was dead.

"I'm scared for my life because I don't know what they'll do to me," Sugarhead said.

What they did, according to Sugarhead, is speed down Memorial Avenue, slamming on the brakes, causing Sugarhead's face to smash into the metal cage in the back of the car.

"I didn't want to black out because I was scared," he said. "I wanted to stay alive, I didn't want to lose consciousness."

Thunder Bay police confirm that Sugarhead was arrested on July 26 for public intoxication and taken to the police station. He was released "when sober with a provincial offences ticket."

"If he feels he has a complaint, there is an established procedure that he can follow, which is his right," police spokesperson Julie Tilbury said in an email to CBC News. "We cannot comment beyond that."

Sugarhead said he is awaiting legal advice before pursuing a formal complaint.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/thunder-bay-police-roughed-me-up-first-nations-man-says-1.3180608>

## **Aboriginal Education & Youth**

### **ACTUA summer camp combines science and Inuit traditional knowledge in Nunavut**

**Science camps run in 8 Nunavut communities this summer**

By Natasha MacDonald-Dupuis, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jul 31, 2015 5:24 AM CT Last Updated: Jul 31, 2015 5:24 AM CT



One of the two groups of science enthusiasts attending an ACTUA science camp in Iqaluit this week. (CBC)

Magnets, soil sampling, you name it; about 30 kids, ages seven to 12, are attending free week-long science camps in eight Nunavut communities this summer

It's part of a science camp program run by ACTUA, a not-for-profit organization that aims to empower youth through science.

Nunavut is a hotbed for scientific research, and camp instructors are hoping this will inspire kids to consider scientific career paths.

But they say they also incorporate traditional Inuit knowledge in the curriculum.

"We try to get an elder to come to each camp," said Stephanie Hill, one of the instructors. "Last week we were fortunate to have an elder come talk to us about plants, so she talked about the medicinal benefits."



Students at the camp learned about pH levels, with the help of multi-coloured food colouring. (CBC)

Science activities at the camp include health science experiments, putting together electronic circuits, and building robots.

The camp also offers computer science workshops through a partnership with Google.

"It's all about encouraging youth to go from consumers of technology to producers of technology," said Hill.

The most popular experiment, however, was building home-made rockets.

"You get to, like, blast it off, and then see how high it goes, like see how far," said a smiling seven-year old Cymonie Kadlutsiak.

The Iqaluit camp wraps up this Friday. Next week, it will move on to Qikiqtarjuaq.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/actua-summer-camp-combines-science-and-inuit-traditional-knowledge-in-nunavut-1.3174854>

## **First Nations teens dig into job training, make exciting discovery**

**One-day archaeology training course results in significant find on Lakehead University campus**

By Jody Porter, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jul 31, 2015 7:00 AM ET Last Updated: Jul 31, 2015 9:15 AM ET



Cole Biedrzycki, Bart Hardy and Gavin Echum show off the copper spear point they discovered as part of a summer training camp for First Nations teens. (Jody Porter/CBC)

Three First Nations teens surprised and delighted their trainers on Thursday when they discovered an ancient spear tip during a one-day archaeology course at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ont.

The exercise was part of the First Nations Natural Resources Youth Employment Program, run by Outland Camps, Confederation College and Lakehead. It gives teens hands-on job experience and training.

The training on Thursday was led by Lakehead anthropology professor Carney Matheson. After a morning in the classroom, the teens started digging small "test pits" along the river bank on the Lakehead campus.

"It's breaking news, it's a very exciting find," Matheson said shortly after the piece was discovered. "There are not a lot of them found in Thunder Bay."

## **'Older than the pyramids'**

The copper-socketted spear tip is natural copper that was beaten down into a small tip that was hafted onto a piece of wood and would have been used on a spear, he said. Copper artifacts typically date back thousands of years.



The copper-socketted spear tip broke in two when the teens were digging it out of the ground. It's a rare find in Thunder Bay that could be thousands of years old. (Jody Porter/CBC)

"We thought we weren't going to find anything really special but we started digging and we found this piece of copper," Gavin Echum said. "We didn't know what it was so we went and asked the main guy and he said it's a piece of history that could be older than the pyramids."

"It's a pretty good feeling," he said.

Cole Biedrzycki said it was exciting to tell his friends about the find, "just so I can make them jealous, because we're the only ones that actually found a copper head here."

Lakehead's anthropology department has been working the site throughout the summer. Matheson said the students' work will help locate and date areas of occupation.

It may also help set a career path for Bart Hardy, 17, the third member of the team that found the spear tip.

"I knew what archaeology was because my brother was doing that kind of stuff but I found this pretty cool today," he said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/first-nations-teens-dig-into-job-training-make-exciting-discovery-1.3174609>

## Major renovations signal growth at First Nations University of Canada

By Kerry Benjoe, Leader-Post August 5, 2015



This photo shows the FNUiv common area that will be renovated into a new teaching space in Regina on August 04, 2015. The university has announced that it's tearing down the museum and moving it into the library. This coincides with other changes happening in the building, which includes new tenants and new classroom/teaching spaces.

REGINA — Growth is forcing change at the First Nations University of Canada.

"We are doing some fairly intensive renovations, but what we really are doing is expanding into all four floors of the university," said FNUiv spokeswoman Racelle

Kooy. “That is the focus mandated by our board and the heart of our strategic plan is about students first and their learning experience.”

The most noticeable change will happen at the ground level.

Kooy said demolition of the first floor, which housed the Plains Red Art Gallery, is expected to begin on Wednesday.

The museum is to be relocated within the library, which is also on the main floor.

Although transitional space for the museum has been identified, the work on finding a permanent space within the university remains ongoing.

Kooy credits FNUUniv’s president for being the visionary behind the overhaul.

When Mark Dockstator was hired he believed the university could find a better way to use the building’s existing space.

For the past six months the faculty, staff and students had an opportunity to provide their input on the process, said Kooy.

The veterans’ glass teepee will remain in its current location, as will the library.

However, to the east of the teepee there are big plans for the large common area.

“We do a lot of community activities, a lot of hosting,” said Kooy. “We also do a lot of activities to share the knowledge of our faculty and staff ... We have some very beautiful spaces here that lend themselves very well for some aspects, but not so much for others.”

A large multi-function room that can accommodate up to 100 people is being built, which is to be used as both a teaching space for students and a place to host community events.

Kooy said renovations are to be complete by the time the students return in September.

The first-floor changes mean the Indian Fine Arts department will get more classroom space.

“They are always very popular, “ said Kooy. “They always fill up, so we are expanding that (space) out.”

The FNUUniv offices located on the second floor are to move to the fourth floor, which means more classroom space will be opened up.

Boardroom space is also being created on the fourth floor that can be used by organizations to host meetings.

The third floor will house the student lounge, student success services and the University of Regina daycare.

Kooy said the idea behind the changes is to not only utilize the space in a more productive way but also to help generate more revenue for the university.

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.leaderpost.com/Major+renovations+signal+growth+First+Nations+University+Canada/11265652/story.html>

## **Cree schools face major absenteeism issues, for students and staff**

**Almost one in four students missed school every day in past 3 years, staff took over 7,000 sick days in 1 year**

By Christopher Herodier, Jaime Little, [CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 06, 2015 2:58 PM CT  
Last Updated: Aug 06, 2015 2:58 PM CT



'In some cases, teachers are not there and the students end up with a substitute teacher,' says Mistissini Chief Richard Shecapio (right). 'So some students don't feel motivated... and their education becomes compromised.' (Corinne Smith/CBC)

Students skipping classes and teachers taking time off add up to major problems in Cree schools, according to a presentation Thursday by the Cree School Board at the Cree Nation Government's annual general assembly in Oujé-Bougoumou, in northern Québec.





Cree School Board Chairperson Kathleen Wootton made absenteeism a focus of her yearly presentation, saying the numbers are a concern and need to be worked on. (Jaime Little/CBC)

Almost one in four students missed school on any given day over the past three years, according to the report. School staff and managers took a total of more than 7,000 sick days in one year.

"Teachers too need to become accountable," said Mistissini Chief Richard Shecapio. "In some cases, teachers are not there and the students end up with a substitute teacher. So some students don't feel motivated... and their education becomes compromised."

Cree School Board Chairperson Kathleen Wootton made absenteeism a focus of her yearly presentation, saying the numbers are a concern and need to be worked on.

Wootton says in some cases, kids aren't showing up for school because they are struggling with violence, hunger and other problems at home.

"Some students are being abused," Wootton said. "Emotional, physical, and even sexual abuse, these are some of the realities that some students live through. And also overcrowded houses where students can't find a quiet space to do homework."

Shecapio said resolving complaints can be a long process.

"If there is a complaint by the parents for instance, the union steps in for the teacher, and it is the student in the end who gets caught in the middle of this situation."

Teachers in the Cree and Inuit schools of northern Québec are represented by the AENQ, the Association des employés du nord québécois.

The Cree School Board provides elementary and high school education in all nine of Québec's Cree communities.



**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/cree-schools-face-major-absenteeism-issues-for-students-and-staff-1.3182099>

## Aboriginal Health

### Inuit org boss heaps praise on Valcourt's NNC re-announcement

**NTI wants in on the NNC decision-making process**

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, July 30, 2015 - 2:31 pm



Chuck Strahl, then the AAND minister, and Nunavut MP Leona Aglukkaq announcing the Nutrition North Canada program at an May 2010 press conference in Iqaluit. (FILE PHOTO)

Cathy Towtongie, the president of Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., said July 30 that she welcomes a move re-announced by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Minister Bernard Valcourt on July 27 that would list Nutrition North Canada savings on sales receipts next year.

“Minister Valcourt’s decision is a step in the right direction. This change will allow Inuit to see exactly how this government subsidy is being used to reduce the extremely high cost of food in our communities,” Towtongie said in a news release.

This past July 27, [Valcourt re-announced a widely-anticipated change to NNC](#) that his department’s officials had already confirmed months ago.

As of April 1 next year, food retailers that use the Nutrition North air freight subsidy must print the amount of NNC subsidy on customer sales receipts.

That’s in reaction to [an embarrassing report on NNC](#) that the Auditor General of Canada, Michael Ferguson, released Nov. 25, 2014.

In it, Ferguson found the federal government does not verify that retailers pass the full value of the NNC subsidy on to customers.

This past March, the [NNC Advisory Board chimed in](#) and recommended that subsidy amounts be printed on customer sales receipts.

And at a public meeting of the advisory board in Iqaluit, Stephen Van Dine, an assistant deputy minister at AAND, confirmed the department had already agreed to imposing that measure on retailers.

In the NTI news release, Towtongie said “Inuit” want more changes to give them direct involvement in the NNC program’s decision-making process.

That includes giving NTI a direct say on any decisions related to any redesign of the program.

“NTI plans to continue to exert strong pressure on the current government, as well as the next government,” Towtongie said.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit\\_org\\_boss\\_heaps\\_praise\\_on\\_valcourts\\_nnc\\_re-announcement/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674inuit_org_boss_heaps_praise_on_valcourts_nnc_re-announcement/)

## **Aboriginal Identity & Representation**

### **Shawinigan's new marketing campaign 'an insult' to First Nations**

By [Sunaya Sapurji](#) 19 hours ago [Yahoo Sports](#) .



Shawinigan Cataractes captain Anthony Beauvillier depicted in First Nations imagery has upset many.

It should come as little surprise that the Shawinigan Cataractes – a team with a chief logo and a caricature mascot named Thomas Hawk (aka Tomahawk) – would take yet another insensitive misstep.

Their latest in cultural appropriation comes in the form of an ill-guided marketing campaign which features three players: captain Anthony Beauvillier, Alexis D'Aoust and Samuel Girard – none of whom identify as First Nations - dressed up in the stereotypical *warrior* motif complete with war paint and braided hair with beads and feathers in team colours.

It's stunning to think someone with the Quebec league team thought this was a good idea.

The slogan for the campaign is the equally tone deaf: "My History. My Colours"

Former Halifax Mooseheads captain [Trey Lewis](#), a Mi'kmaq from the Elsipogtog First Nation in New Brunswick, can't understand how anyone with the team thought this would be a positive marketing tool. He said it might have been different if the players were themselves First Nations or if the team was on or at very least associated with one of the reserves in the area.

"It's disrespectful," Lewis said. "To be marketing a team with First Nations imagery, I think they could have come up with a better idea to help promote their hockey team."

“In this day and age you have music festivals like Osheaga and Tomorrowland that are banning people from wearing Native American headdresses because it’s offensive.”

The 22-year-old who played in parts of five seasons with the Mooseheads, is no stranger to racism in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. During his tenure in the league he faced slurs about his First Nations heritage.

“I definitely – a couple times - faced some racism throughout my days in the (QMJHL),” said Lewis. “It’s still very surprising that the organization itself would resort to that type of marketing. I just didn’t think that someone up the ladder (on the team) would think that’s a good idea. It’s different when you face it on the ice and it’s in the heat of the moment; stuff like that I can kind of understand. When you sit down and put a plan together for marketing and you come up with that idea, it’s just really surprising.”

A voicemail left on the cellphone of Shawinigan’s director of marketing and communications, Tommy Tremblay, was not returned.

QMJHL director of communications, Photi Sotiropoulos, says the league had no prior knowledge of the team’s new marketing campaign.

“The league did not endorse nor was consulted on the Shawinigan Cataractes branding,” he said. “This was solely a team initiative.”

This isn’t the first time a team in the Canadian Hockey League has come under fire for using offensive images. The Western Hockey League’s Moose Jaw Warriors were criticized for wearing throwback jerseys featuring an Aboriginal caricature wielding a tomahawk in one hand and a hockey stick in the other. The Prince Albert Raiders were forced to nix their throwbacks featuring a cartoonish Arab man holding a scimitar after much public outcry.

The debate has raged for years about the NFL’s team in Washington using the nickname “Redskins” and more recently the NCAA imposed sanctions on teams using tribal logos and nicknames. This eventually prompted the University of North Dakota to drop its “Fighting Sioux” moniker in 2012 after years of legal wrangling.

It’s hard to believe given all the recent debate over the issue, that the Cataractes would move to embrace what everyone else is running away from publicly. .



Shawinigan mascot Thomas Hawk aka Tomahawk.

“When you’re promoting it in a French community without anyone from the First Nations in the pictures it’s a different story,” said Lewis, who is in his second year at St. Francis Xavier University. “It comes off as almost mocking.”

Chad Denny, a second round pick of the Atlanta Thrashers, who played for four seasons with the QMJHL’s Lewiston Maineiacs, wonders why the team didn’t reach out to the First Nations.

“It’s like an insult and it’s inappropriate,” said Denny, a Mi’kmaq from the Eskasoni First Nation in Nova Scotia. “Why don’t they ask the First Nations communities that are near there? They’ve got two big Mohawk reserves not too far from Shawinigan, you’ve got Kahnawake there – not too far away.

“They’re not First Nations so, to be honest with you, I don’t know why they’re using it.”

In June, Montreal Canadiens goaltender [Carey Price](#), whose mother Lynda is a former chief of the Ulkatcho First Nation in British Columbia, won the Vezina Trophy as the NHL’s best netminder. At the awards show in Las Vegas, he took the opportunity to speak directly to First Nations kids.

“I would like to take a moment to encourage First Nations youth,” said Price in his acceptance speech. “A lot of people would say it’s very improbable that I would make it to this point in my life. I made it here because I wasn’t discouraged; you know I worked hard to get here. I took advantage of every opportunity that I had and I would really like to encourage First Nations youth to be leaders in their communities. Be proud of your heritage and don’t be discouraged from the improbable.”

It was an important reminder that hockey has the ability to become a positive force in the lives of many children – particularly those growing up on reserves.

Lewis has seen that kind of impact first hand, when he took the QMJHL’s President’s Cup and Memorial Cup back home to Elsipogtog. It was there that he was celebrated and given a special gift from the band council. It was an important moment for Lewis, considering how much his community had supported him throughout his hockey career.

He sees the marketing campaign in Shawinigan as helping impede the progress people like Price are making in the hockey community.

“Someone like Carey Price is going to motivate so many First Nations youth,” said Lewis. “But then it’s a step backwards for Shawinigan to go and try to abuse First Nations looks to promote their hockey team. They’re people that aren’t even First Nations with a team that’s not on a reserve. It’s ludicrous.”

**Direct Link:** <http://sports.yahoo.com/news/shawinigan-s-new-marketing-campaign--an-insult--to-first-nations-200947690.html>

# Aboriginal Politics

## Leslee White-Eye joins growing roster of female First Nations chiefs

By [Elianna Lev](#) / [Daily Brew](#) – Fri, 31 Jul, 2015



Leslee White-Eye became chief of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation earlier this week.

Earlier this week Leslee White-Eye became chief of the Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, the first female chief of the band in more than 60 years.

“Her success is our success,” says Isadore Day, Ontario regional chief. He cites the Indian Act laws, which prohibited women from voting or running in elections until 1951, as a digression for the First Nations community.

It wasn’t until Bill C-31, which amended the Indian Act in 1985, that things started to noticeably change.

“It’s taken us a few years to get us here,” he says. “We’re now seeing not just more women in leadership roles, but the quality women bring to the First Nations is quite evident across the country.”

White-Eye agrees. She says she wonders about “what’s in the water” when it comes to women in political leadership roles in the First Nations community. There are about 130 female chiefs across the country, compared to 10 in 1960.

“Our women have always been leaders,” she says.

When it comes to addressing her platform, White-Eye is mindful with her words.



As the first female chief of the band since 1953, the 47-year-old is clear on her intention: to continue serving her council and community, which is located outside of London, Ont., in a democratic way.

While financial accountability and job creation are top of mind, White-Eye says that first and foremost, her role is to listen to the community and her council.

“I don’t want to be a leader that comes out ahead of the people, who dictates or directs the vision of the community,” she tells Yahoo Canada News. “I campaigned on what I personally thought we needed to be focusing on. But on the actual direction of the community, that’s still to be defined.”

Less than a week into to her new role, White-Eye says it’s been a crazy run so far, though she’s more than competent to handle it.

Serving her people is something that’s been long ingrained in White-Eye’s genetic makeup. Being raised by parents who were active community members, organizing powwows and sporting events, she quickly picked up on how to be a planner.

“I’ve been raised to donate my time because it’s lots of fun,” she says.

Her list of extracurricular activities is extensive, from sitting on student councils and sports committees to organizing powwow competitions. She sees her experience as baby steps to where she is now.

“You get pretty confident and you get to know the community and network, and see what the community is facing and internal challenges they’re facing,” she says.

The mother of three also worked as a teacher at the school at Chippewas of the Thames and then, for nine years with the Ministry of Education.

**Direct Link:** <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/blogs/dailybrew/more-first-nations-women-in-leadership-roles-175450285.html>

## **NDP candidate puts focus on First Nations issues**

**Laferriere, Crowder tour former Mohawk Institute Residential School**





*Woodland Cultural Centre acting executive director Amos Key Jr., left, speaks with federal Brantford-Brant NDP candidate Marc Laferriere and NDP MP Jean Crowder outside the former Mohawk Institute Residential School on Tuesday.*

Brant News

By [Victoria Gray](#)

Aug 01, 2015

Funding formulas for indigenous needs haven't changed in decades.

That's something federal Brantford-Brant NDP candidate Marc Laferriere wants to address. He and British Columbia MP and former aboriginal affairs critic Jean Crowder spent Tuesday talking to members of local aboriginal organizations and politicians.

"We need to address the systemic issues caused by the Conservative government by listening and making changes to legislation to reconcile some of the issues of Canada as a whole," Laferriere said during an interview at the Mohawk Institute.

Both he and Crowder believe the government needs to rethink the way indigenous people are treated.

"There are major issues that need to be addressed," Crowder said.

They spoke to Six Nations of the Grand River elected council, Six Nations fire chief Matthew Miller, Mississaugas of the New Credit Chief Bryan Laforme and members of New Credit's elected council. Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin (I Am A Kind Man) program facilitator Doug Doolittle and Woodland Cultural Centre acting executive director Amos Key Jr. were also on hand for a discussion about the Mohawk Institute Save the Evidence campaign.

Miller and Six Nations elected council Chief Ava Hill talked about the "chronic underfunding" of the reserve's fire department.

Laferriere said it's unsettling to know a standard fire hall receives \$75 per person per year and Miller's only receives \$25.

“There are issues with infrastructure and territory size, but the funding gap is huge,” he said. “A member of Six Nations is more likely to die in a fire than a non-native person. We need to do something before we have a tragedy.”

Crowder and Laferriere spoke to Key Jr. about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Mohawk Institute and took a tour of the former residential school.

Crowder said she doesn’t want to see the 94 recommendations in the Truth and Reconciliation document disappear, but she knows it will take time to implement them.

“I don’t believe we should be telling indigenous people what the most important recommendations are,” she said. “We need to work closely with First Nations communities to find out which of the 94 recommendations we should implement first.”

The pair also toured the Mohawk Institute.

“When you’re a kid and you don’t know the history and you play in those orchards, throwing crab apples, you don’t know people were hurt and oppressed,” Laferriere said. “When you learn that history it’s jarring.”

Key Jr. said the Save the Evidence campaign aims to fix the roof of the Mohawk Institute and turn the building into a museum of conscience with interactive displays. He also said the museum’s patronage has increased 100 per cent since the Truth and Reconciliation report was released.

The campaign has raised \$500,000 of its \$1 million goal.

“It’s great that more people want to learn about this and people are supporting us,” he said.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.brantnews.com/news-story/5770960-ndp-candidate-puts-focus-on-first-nations-issues/>

## **Voter clinic aims to boost aboriginal turnout at the polls**

Sarah Petz

Wednesday, August 5, 2015 4:41:51 EDT PM



Hoping to build on the success of their first voter registration clinic this spring, Rally the First Nation vote is holding a second event in Garden River First Nation next Monday.

The grassroots organization is attempting to organize eligible aboriginal voters during the federal election to reverse traditionally low aboriginal voter turnout, and ultimately have Aboriginal issues better represented on Parliament Hill.

The clinic is meant to give First Nations people a chance to register to vote while also learning more about the Rally the First Nation Vote initiative and hear from local First Nations leaders and party candidates. After their first local event in May packed the Sault Ste. Marie Indian Friendship Centre with potential voters, organizers are hoping to keep the momentum going, said Tyrone Souliere, one of the organizers of the event.

This Monday's event is being organized in conjunction with the Union of Ontario Indians, Garden River First Nation, Batchewana First Nation and Mississauga First Nation, who will all have representatives at the event, set to be held at the Garden River Community Centre.

Souliere said candidates Skip Morrison (NDP) and Terry Sheehan (Liberal) have said they'll attend, while organizers also plan to extend an invitation to Conservative MP Bryan Hayes. The event will be an opportunity for the three candidates to explain how their campaign platforms address First Nations issues, Souliere said.

Souliere said he doesn't think the 11-week marathon-style campaign, which kicked off earlier this week, will have much impact on the initiative.

"We've always been pushing really hard on organizing First Nations, so it really doesn't change our plans," he said.

Ultimately, the goal of the campaign is to bring out enough First Nations voters to have a serious impact on course of the election, and elect a government "that would honour our treaties, our charter rights and our indigenous rights."

"That's the goal of rally the first nation vote," he said.

The event starts at 5 p.m.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.saultstar.com/2015/08/05/voter-clinic-aims-to-boost-aboriginal-turnout-at-the-polls>

## An indigenous guide to the 2015 federal election

**Who are the indigenous candidates and what are the parties offering indigenous voters?**

By Tim Fontaine, [CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 06, 2015 11:00 AM CT Last Updated: Aug 07, 2015 7:53 AM CT



Since Conservative [Angus Mckay](#) -- who was Métis -- became the first indigenous person elected to Canada's parliament in 1871, Indigenous Peoples have entered the realm of federal politics in increasing numbers. With the 42nd federal election underway, here's a brief look at the party's indigenous candidates, platforms and some ridings to watch.

### Who's running?

Between the Conservatives, Green Party, Liberals and NDP, so far a total of 35 indigenous candidates are running in the 42nd federal election. That's up slightly from the 2011 election, when there were 31 indigenous candidates in those same parties. This number could still rise because the deadline for nominations isn't until September 28, 2015.

Here are the candidates:

### **Conservative Party of Canada (CPC)**

[Leona Aglukkaq](#) (Inuit) - Nunavut

[Rob Clarke](#) (Cree) - Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River

[Floyd Roland](#) (Inuvialuit) - Northwest Territories

### **Green Party of Canada (GPC)**

Roger Fleury (Algonquin) - Hull-Alymer

[Fran Hunt-Jinnouchi](#) (Kwakiutl/Quatsino) - Cowichan-Malahat-Langford

[Lorraine Rekmans](#) (Algonquin) - Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

[Brenda Sayers](#) (Nuu-chah-nult) - North Island-Powell River

### **Liberal Party of Canada (LPC)**

[Lisa Abbott](#) (Cree) - Saskatoon West

[Della Anaquod](#) (Saulteaux, Cree, Dakota) - Regina-Qu'appelle

[Philippe Archambault](#) (Métis) - Lanark-Frontenac-Kingston

[Rebecca Chartrand](#) (Anishinaabe, Métis) - Churchill-Keewatinook Aski

[Trish Cowie](#) (Aboriginal) - Parry Sound-Muskoka

[Louis De Jaeger](#) (Métis) - Chilliwack-Hope

[Yvonne Jones](#) (Métis) - Labrador

[Lawrence Joseph](#) (Cree) - Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River

[Robert-Falcon Ouellette](#) (Cree) - Winnipeg Centre

[Don Rusnak](#) (Anishinaabe) - Thunder Bay-Rainy River

[Karley Scott](#) (Métis) - Central Okanagan-Similkameen-Nicola

Hunter Tootoo (Inuit) - Nunavut

[Dan Vandal](#) (Métis) - Saint Boniface-Saint Vital

[Jody Wilson-Raybould](#) (Kwakwaka'wakw) - Vancouver Granville

### **New Democratic Party of Canada (NDP)**

Cameron Alexis (Nakota) - Peace River-Westlock

Sandra Arias (Cree) - Battlefords-Lloydminster

[Melissa Atkinson](#) (Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in) - Yukon

April Bourgeois (Métis) - Regina-Wascana

Chantal Crête (Métis) – Argenteuil Petite-Nation

[Jonathan Genest-Jourdain](#) (Innu) - Manicouagan

[Rex Isaac](#) (Anishinaabe) - Lambton-Kent-Middlesex

[Georgina Jolibois](#) (Dene) - Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River

Aaron Paquette (Cree) - Edmonton Manning

Edward Rudkowski (Innu) – Labrador

[Romeo Saganash](#) (Cree) - Abitibi-Baie-James-Nunavik--Eeyou

[Carleen Thomas](#) (Tsleil-Waututh) - North Vancouver

[Nancy Tremblay](#) (Abenaki) - Orléans  
Duane Zaraska (Métis) – Lakeland

### **What are they offering Indigenous peoples?**

With the campaign underway, political parties are making all sorts of pledges to Canadians - and it's no different for indigenous voters. Here's a look at indigenous-specific items being offered to indigenous voters.

#### **Conservative Party**

The Conservatives say election platforms will be released as the election campaign progresses. However, before the writ dropped the party made some big ticket pledges (including in the most recent federal budget);

- \$215 million to provide skills development and training for aboriginal peoples;
- \$200 million for First Nations education and schools;
- \$30 million for a land management scheme aimed at helping economic development on reserves.
- Review the 94 recommendations released by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission
- Commit \$567 million over five years to help build "stronger communities."
- \$500 million toward building and renovating schools on reserves.

#### **Green Party**

Although Indigenous Peoples are mentioned and included throughout the Green Party's ["Vision Green"](#) there is a specific "Aboriginal policy." Here are some highlights of what the Green Party says MPs will do if elected:

- Implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Restore the \$5.1 billion commitment and specifics of the Kelowna Accord.
- Work with aboriginal groups to create an Aboriginal Lands and Treaties Tribunal Act that deals with land claims, negotiations, etc.
- Immediately implement lands claims agreements already negotiated and that may have stalled due to lack of funding.
- Review all existing federal policies on self-government.
- Ensure that any self-government negotiations do not lead to extinguishment of aboriginal title and rights or assimilation.
- Fully implement the recommendations of the 1996 Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.
- Remove the 2% funding cap on First Nation education and fully fund the program back log (\$424 million).
- Ensure that governments and corporations honor and abide by the Sparrow Decision (which recognizes the aboriginal right to fish) as well as the Tsilhqot'in ruling, which recognizes aboriginal title.

- Negotiate and legislate primary hunting, fishing, trapping, and logging rights for aboriginal peoples on traditional lands.
- If pushed by First Nations, work to scrap the Indian Act.

## **Liberal Party**

Much of what the Liberals are offering indigenous peoples is included in their ["Real Change"](#) platform document, under the section, "United and Inclusive Canada." If they assume power, the party says a Liberal government will;

- Immediately lift the two per cent cap on funding for First Nations programs and services (which a Liberal government introduced in 1996)
- Implement the Kelowna Accord "in a manner that meets today's challenges."
- New funding to support and enhance indigenous languages
- Ensure that First Nations have control over First Nations education.
- Equitable funding for child and family services on reserves.
- Immediately launch a national public inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada.
- Enact the 94 recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, including the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Repeal changes to the Elections Act that might make it harder for indigenous peoples to vote
- Development of a "Federal Reconciliation Framework" with mechanisms to resolve grievances associated with existing historical treaties and modern land-claims agreements.
- Conduct a full review of legislation unilaterally imposed on indigenous peoples by the Harper government.
- While on a pre-campaign stop in Winnipeg, Liberal leader Justin Trudeau [vowed to contribute](#) the federal funding needed build a road for the Shoal Lake 40 First Nation.

## **NDP**

The NDP are revealing [platform planks](#) as the campaign progresses but leader Tom Mulcair has already announced some pledges to indigenous peoples;

- Creation of a cabinet-level committee, chaired by the prime minister, to ensure federal government decisions respect treaty rights, inherent rights and Canada's international obligations
- Within 100 days of assuming office, call an inquiry into the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls.
- Ensure that all new legislation abides by the United Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
- Begin to act on recommendations made by the Truth & Reconciliation Commission



- Contribute federal funds to build an all-weather road for the Shoal Lake 40 First Nation.

## **Ridings to watch**

**Churchill-Keewatinook Aski:** Liberal indigenous candidate Rebecca Chartrand will attempt to unseat the NDPs Niki Ashton in a northern Manitoba riding with a huge indigenous population.

**Desnethé-Missinippi-Churchill River:** As it was in 2011, the only riding where all three candidates are indigenous. Conservative Incumbent Rob Clarke will defend his seat from candidates Lawrence Joseph (LPC) and Georgina Jolibois (NDP).

**Kenora:** Bob Nault, a former Liberal Minister of Indian Affairs, will attempt to unseat Conservative Greg Rickford. The NDP say they're going after this riding hard and are running [Howard Hampton](#), a former party advisor for the Ring of Fire -- a planned chromite mining and smelting development.

**Madawaska-Restigouche:** Home riding of Aboriginal Affairs minister Bernard Valcourt. Valcourt is being challenged by Rene Arseneault (LPC) and Rosaire L'Italien (NDP)

**Peace River-Westlock:** A newly formed riding that only came into effect during the 42nd federal election. Former Assembly of First Nations regional chief Cameron Alexis (NDP) is the only declared candidate so far.

**Winnipeg Centre:** Former Winnipeg mayoral candidate Robert-Falcon Ouellette (LPC) will attempt to unseat long-time MP Pat Martin (NDP) in a riding where over 13,000 - or 20% - of voters are indigenous.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/an-indigenous-guide-to-the-2015-federal-election-1.3179421>

## **AFN chief pushing First Nations people to cast votes this fall**

Chief says national inquiry into indigenous women should be an election issue

Reported by **News Talk Radio Staff**

First Posted: Aug 6, 2015 6:06am | Last Updated: Aug 6, 2015 8:02am

Whether it's Stephen Harper, Justin Trudeau, Thomas Mulcair or Elizabeth May, Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde says he's happy and willing to work with either candidate who becomes prime minister.

“Some chiefs are saying don't vote Conservative, some chiefs are saying, 'Hey, I vote for Conservatives so you have to respect the positions,” Bellegarde said.

Leading up to what is now the longest election campaign in 142 years; Bellegarde said while chiefs are calling for change at the top, his focus is about getting First Nations voters to cast a ballot this fall.

“The AFN's position is to encourage people to exercise that vote and make sure First Nations people do vote because our issues do matter.”

The main issue for Bellegarde is the gap between First Nations communities and the rest of Canada.

“According to the United Nations human development index Canada is rated sixth. But when you apply that to First Nations people we're 63rd and that gap is what needs to be closed,” Bellegarde said. “Government's need to start investing in education and training dealing with a backlog on housing, the high number of First Nation children in provincial care and the high number of First Nation people in jail.”

To enact change, Bellegarde said eligible aboriginal voters need to participate in the fall federal election and get voter turnout up from the dismal 45 per cent turnout in 2011. Bellegarde said First Nation voters can tip the scales in 51 federal riding across Canada, seven in Saskatchewan.

“If it stays the same at 45 per cent ... we need to do a better job educating our people to get out because of the impact it could have on voting; 51 ridings that could make the difference between a minority and majority government,” he said.

As the election trail moves forward, Bellegarde hopes the federal parties make an inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women an election issue, after the Harper government came out saying no to an inquiry.

“The Conservatives have been clear on their position on a call for a national inquiry, the Liberals say if they're elected there will be one; the NDP says if they are elected there will be one,” he said.

Because of the Conservatives' stance on an inquiry, Ken Coates, professor and historian at the University of Saskatchewan said Bellegarde may have an uphill battle if Harper is re-elected.

“If the Conservatives win again, he is going to have to mend some fences but back off and look at the Conservative record,” Coates said, referring to Harper's movement on a Truth and Reconciliation commission and the record of former aboriginal affairs ministers in Jim Prentice and Chuck Strahl.

“He is doing what every national chief should do and that's fight to the finish to make

sure the government of Canada and people hold obligations to First Nation folks, he has the right to push for what legally is right for First Nations in Canada.”

Coates said Bellegarde will likely continue to be a great leader for First Nations and expects him to work diligently with a new aboriginal affairs minister after the Oct. 19 election.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.newstalk650.com/story/afn-chief-pushing-first-nations-people-cast-votes-fall/572910>

## Leon Thompson: Opting out of electoral system will only ensure the status quo for First Nations people

[Leon Thompson, Special to National Post](#) | August 6, 2015 1:40 PM ET



Assembly of First Nations Chief Perry Bellegarde (in headdress) and Justice Murray Sinclair (in black suit), TRC commissioner, march during the Walk for Reconciliation, part of the closing events of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Sunday, May 31, 2015 in Gatineau, Que.

The Prime Minister officially kicked off the 78 day election campaign Sunday, engaging the longest Canadian election since 1872. Only a few days before, I saw an article circulating on Facebook discussing First Nations and the Federal election. The article’s summary suggested that First Nations people participating in the Federal election are helping the government [diminish First Nations rights](#). It suggests that participating in the Federal election plays into the government’s plans to dispossess First Nations of their lands and sovereignty. Why? Because this is how government has always acted, and our participation will only ensure the extinguishment of our peoples and ways of life.

I disagree.

Until enfranchisement, Indigenous people could not vote to express themselves in the system that so brutally damaged us. Thinking about the reality of our situation is neither easy nor comfortable, but we cannot hide from the reality that Indigenous peoples were,

for a long time, treated as less than human. We were brainwashed into thinking we were inferior, that our lives had less intrinsic value, that how we understood the world was wrong and evil. As a result, there is not a heart that beats in this country that does not have the indelible mark of colonialism pressed into it. You can understand then why some First Nation peoples do not want to participate in elections.

On reserve First Nations voter turnout hovered between forty and fifty per cent in the last four elections, less than the general public, according to Elections Canada. This is not surprising; political parties have not meaningfully courted the Indigenous vote in previous elections. Candidates don't always visit the reserves in their ridings, which contributes to the misinformation in the community.

What qualifies as a primary address, or proof of residency, are questions on the front of mind for those who are interested and willing to participate. Others are misinformed from years of being ignored, to the point where they do not want to participate. I once heard a story about a man running around a reserve saying if First Nation peoples voted in a provincial election, they would lose their status. These issues are all easily dealt with, but if we continue to operate the way we have previously, we will deny aspects of our collective identity.

This is precisely why Indigenous people need more of a presence in Canadian politics. Only seven of 308 MPs elected in the 2011 election were Indigenous. In 2013, Peter Penashue lost in a by-election. Rod Bruinooge and Shelly Glover are not running again. This means only four Indigenous candidates, Romeo Saganash, Leona Aglukkaq, Rob Clarke, and Jonathan Genest-Jourdain, are up for re-election. Until Sunday, this was Indigenous representation in the House of Commons.

Leaving the electoral system to non-Indigenous people only perpetuates the lack of understanding the values of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

Canada has not acted in the best interests of Indigenous people, and election after election we are ignored. Does this mean we need to walk away from voting? Because the government might continue to do what it's always been doing? I cannot accept this. Leaving the electoral system to non-Indigenous people only perpetuates the lack of understanding the values of First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

A non-indigenous person does not have, without our input, a frame of reference that can provide a deep understanding of Indigenous issues. In the summer of 2011, someone I met through friends asked me a bunch of questions about Indigenous peoples, ways of life, and closed the conversation with "Thanks for answering my questions, you're the first Indian person I've ever met." This happened in downtown Ottawa. This is why we cannot reject participation in the Canadian electoral process. If we shy away from electoral participation, First Nations without clean water, proper housing, and viable economies, are just business as usual.

Between the election in 2011 and now, we have entered an Indigenous cultural resurgence, blending the old with the new. A Tribe Called Red shakes stages all over the country while showcasing traditional Indigenous dancing talent. Rap groups like MobBounce address issues facing the modern Indigenous worldview. CBC has a radio show called NewFire, which is all about giving the mic to young Indigenous people, and this follows on the success of 8th Fire, where Wab Kinew walked Canada through our painful history, and the positive potential that we have together. Missing and Murdered Indigenous women are finally in the national spotlight, with everyone but the Federal government calling for a national inquiry.

These are not our parents' political conditions. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission is dropping some of the heaviest truths upon Canada; a call to action with 94 recommendations in June, and several full volumes of findings sometime later this year. We're seeing more young, positive Indigenous role models pop up in all communities. We are starting to be heard in mainstream culture, and traditional Indigenous culture is increasingly resurgent. This year, the leaders of the Federal NDP and Liberals appeared at the Assembly of First Nations General Assembly and set out a platform for engaging with Indigenous peoples. Why would we now step away from engaging with Canadian political parties in one of the few ways that they cannot ignore?

A First Nation person's vote is worth just as much as a new Canadian's or a third generation settler-Canadian's. And there are hundreds of thousands of us, spread across the country, able to freely cast a ballot with no interference. I am not concerned with being assimilated by a ballot box. I am concerned with Indigenizing the vote. If you're 18 or older and register to vote ([which is SUPER easy](#)), you have the chance to make your voice heard. Help Canada rediscover its Indigenous roots. Eleven weeks of campaigning means so many more days to raise Indigenous concerns, and to encourage Indigenous people in Canada to vote.

We cannot expel the racist thoughts from the minds of those who simply don't understand history and the generational implications it carries. We can however expel from government those people who do not believe our concerns are warranted. We can vote for candidates who will bring us to the table, so we may correct their misconceptions. We can make a difference by electing people who respect First Nations, Métis, and Inuit world views. We need to elect those who will listen to concerns with empathy and create a space for Indigenous people to join in navigating a positive way forward.

So I'm going to cover my digital canoe frame with articles of Truth and Reconciliation, my paddle made of Twitter's wings, and I will retweet into the mainstream. Canada is listening, and there is much we need to say.

*Leon Thompson is a nehiyaw law student in Saskatoon, SK.*

**Direct Link:** <http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/leon-thompson-opting-out-of-electoral-system-will-only-ensure-the-status-quo-for-first-nations-people>

# Sudbury-area first nation hails 'success'

Thursday, August 6, 2015 12:43:47 EDT AM



*Ryan Byrne, For The Sudbury Star*

After 16 years of drafts and consultations, members the Atikameksheng Anishnawbek finally have ratified their G'Chi-Naaknigewin, or constitution.

The process for creating the constitution began in 1999 before being finalized on July 24 of this year with a 64% vote.

Chief Steve Miller said that the constitution was developed because Atikameksheng Anishnawbek believes that "a constitution is needed and is the supreme law of a nation. It sets out the laws that determine and are agreed upon by the people."

"The adoption of (the constitution) affirms that we as a First Nations people have the right to self-determination and to govern ourselves."

Atikameksheng Anishnawbek is located about 20 km west of downtown Sudbury and has a population of about 1,150 members.

Miller said the document went through nine drafts before it was finalized.

"What makes up the constitution is our values, our languages and traditions, the lands and territories, government and legislative authority, lawmaking process and community decision making, proclamation and registration of laws and enforcement of those laws," said Miller.

"It's very general - it has to be general because if it is specific the supreme law is exactly that - nothing overrides it ... it's an umbrella with all the other ingredients to run a nation."

The constitution may be amended in the future, but requires a vote from the community.

"It's a success story. To have a process that has been so long, it's gratifying to have a community that understands," said Miller. "The general public and some in our community wonder why we need a constitution. Right now as it goes with the government of Canada or Ontario, those laws are legislative laws ... designed by the Canadian government and forced on First Nations in order to move First Nations forward, but over the last 150 years, First Nations have not moved forward - we are at least 20-30 years behind the mainstream, but with a document that is 150 years old we wonder why.

"We are taking that power back, it is an inherent right - we have always had the right for self-determination and self-governance and this is just one step in a very long journey to make these laws - it doesn't happen overnight, but at least we have a constitution that is the foundation of the underlying procedures and laws."

Anishinabek Nation Grand Council Chief Patrick Madahbee congratulated Atikameksheng Anishnawbek members for ratifying their constitution.

"This is a historic milestone," said Madahbee. "The Anishinabek Nation has been working for several years to develop the Anishinabek Nation Chi-Naaknigewin and to provide support to the Anishinabek First Nations in developing their own constitutions. Atikameksheng Anishnawbek is the fourth community to pass their constitution, it is rewarding to see that all of the effort that has gone into developing community constitutions is now showing results.

"The main benefit of a community constitution is that it will provide a First Nation the ability to make their own laws instead of relying on laws imposed by other governments. First Nation citizens have the authority to deal with the issues that they deem necessary and prioritize those issues. We encourage First Nations to develop their own constitutions and laws. A constitution is an excellent means of asserting our jurisdiction."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.thesudburystar.com/2015/08/06/sudbury-area-first-nation-hails-success>

## **Energy, the Environment & Natural Resources**

### **Environmentalists, First Nations oppose licence to keep Swan Hills waste facility operating**

[Darcy Henton, Calgary Herald](#)

Published on: August 1, 2015 | Last Updated: August 1, 2015 6:00 AM MDT





A plume of smoke rises up into the air from one of the stacks at the Swan Hills waste treatment plant. (File photo.) Dean Bicknell / Calgary Herald

Environmentalists and First Nations say it's time to mothball the money-losing Swan Hills hazardous waste treatment plant now that its licence to operate is expiring this fall.

But the local MLA and town officials say they support renewal of the plant's licence when it expires Nov. 1 because the facility provides a needed service and more than 100 local jobs.

The plant's website boasts the Swan Hills treatment centre is the "only facility of its kind in Canada and one of the few in the world."

But Sucker Creek First Nation Chief Jim Badger said Thursday the plant has contaminated the forest and poisoned traditional lands.

"It was paradise for us and it has been ruined," he said.

But Badger isn't optimistic his community's opposition will prevent the plant's licence from being renewed since legislation stipulates Albertans have to be directly affected in order to have their voices heard.

"To be directly affected you pretty much have to be standing right on top of it," he said.

He said he plans to meet with officials from Sena Waste Services, the plant operators since 2011, to raise his concerns directly.



The inorganic chemical waste treatment plant at the Swan Hills Waste Treatment Plant on July 15, 2010.  
Ryan Jackson / Calgary Herald

No one from the company was available to comment, but the firm has posted its 899-page application on the plant's website.

Jule Asterisk of the Keepers of the Athabasca said plant opponents are concerned that the incineration of PCBs and the injection of liquid hazardous waste into the ground pose a threat to the environment through allowable emissions and unplanned leaks.

"One of our concerns is whether incineration is the best way to treat hazardous waste," she said Wednesday. "There have been allowable PCB releases going on for decades now."

A recent study of the Lesser Slave Watershed reported that an accidental release of dioxins, furans and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) from the Swan Hills Facility into the air caused an increase of these harmful substances in soils and wildlife in the area, resulting in a wild game and fish health advisory.

"Concentrations of the contaminants have declined in fish from Chrystina Lake and wild game within a distance of 30 km since then, but remain elevated compared to reference sites. Therefore the health advisory is still active, although reduced in scope," says the May 25 report prepared for the Lesser Slave Watershed Council.

The Keepers of the Athabasca point out in their letter opposing the plant that serious explosions in 1996, 1997 and 2009 released large amounts of PCBs into the environment and traditional hunting and gathering area of the Swan River First Nation, Sucker Creek First Nation and Driftpile Cree Nation.

"Regionally, trace amounts of both arsenic and PCBs showed a marked increase between 1988 and 1990," noted the letter signed by Keepers of the Athabasca co-chairs Doug Badger and Bruce Jackson. "More current research needs to be performed."



A waste containment storage pad at the Swan Hills Waste Treatment Plant on July 15, 2010. Ryan Jackson / Edmonton Journal

The group is concerned that hydraulic “fracking” by oil and gas exploration companies has the potential to cause groundwater contamination. The activity has already been blamed for earthquakes in the area.

But second-term town councillor Jeff Goebel said Thursday that the 1,500 residents of Swan Hills aren’t concerned about leaks from the plant.

“I don’t hear much concern nor consternation about the treatment centre’s daily operation,” he said. “It’s somewhat discouraging with the negativity that is sort of hung around the plant. We see the benefit for the people of Alberta.”

Goebel said the plant burns 30,000 tonnes of waste annually.

“Where’s that waste go if the plant is gone?” he asked.

Wildrose MLA Glenn van Dijken, representing Barrhead-Morinville-Westlock, said his party endorses the renewal of the plant’s operating licence.

“The fact is the facility is there and it does serve the public good,” he said. “We have a need to dispose of these wastes. From our standpoint it would not be wise to look at shutting a place like that down. At the end of the day, what are you going to do with it? Where would you move it?”



A waste containment storage pad at the Swan Hills Waste Treatment Plant in Swan Hills. Ryan Jackson / Edmonton Journal

He said residents have expressed concerns about what is at stake if the licence is not renewed and the facility is closed.

“It provides a lot of jobs for that small community and they are concerned about losing it.”

He said opinion is mixed, however, over a proposal to expand the plant to dispose of medical waste.

Goebel said the plant began receiving medical waste July 20 and conducted a test burn of 18,000 tonnes Thursday.

“As far as I know the test burn went quite well,” he said.

The facility was built in 1987 to destroy persistent organic wastes through high-temperature incineration, according to the Lesser Slave Watershed report. It says the plant has destroyed more than 285,000 tonnes of hazardous waste, “which has led to the virtual elimination of Alberta’s entire inventory of PCBs.”

But the plant has been losing money at a rate of \$30-million a year and has cost taxpayers more than \$440-million. A 2014 environment consultant’s report has estimated the cost of remediating the site at \$176.2 million by 2025.

**Direct Link:** <http://calgaryherald.com/news/politics/environmentalists-first-nations-oppose-licence-to-keep-swan-hills-waste-facility-operating>

## **Oil Sands Fail: Nexen Admits Spill Could Have Gone Undetected for Two Weeks**

[Theresa Braine](#)

8/1/15

As crews continue scraping up two football fields’ worth of black goo that spilled from a Nexen Energy pipeline into the muskeg of northern Alberta, Canada, First Nations and tribes are upping their opposition to proposed pipeline projects.

The company itself has admitted that it not only has no idea what caused the spill or why state-of-the-art detection technology didn’t work, but also that the pipeline could have been leaking for two weeks before being discovered by a worker on July 15. The latter admission in particular has angered First Nations and U.S. tribes alike, drawing comparisons to the 2010 Kalamazoo, Michigan pipeline rupture that spilled 20,000 barrels—the Nexen spill is 31,500 barrels, or 1.3 million gallons of emulsion—and is still being cleaned up.

“They really need to pay attention more to the concerns of the First Nations,” said Mikisew Cree Nation Chief Steve Courtoreille, who represents about 50,000 people as Grand Chief of Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta, in an interview [The Globe and Mail](#) published on July 31. “They’re telling us that they put all these checks and balances in place to make sure this doesn’t happen, and then it happens. We’re not saying no to development, but how much longer can we take this type of destruction to our lands?”

The spill has only increased mistrust and strengthened opposition to other pipeline projects, and not just among Natives and environmentalists.

“The Nexen spill is going to be brought into the larger conversation of why we don’t need tar-sands pipelines,” Kendall Mackey, the national tar-sands campaign manager with Energy Action Coalition in Washington, told [Bloomberg News](#).

Among Indigenous Peoples, that is already happening. Below the 49th Parallel, members of the Rosebud Sioux, Yankton Sioux and other tribes, plus the Indigenous Environmental Network and the No KXL Dakota Coalition of several environmental and Native groups, set out on horseback on July 24 from the four directions. They headed for Fort Pierre, South Dakota, after parading a black banner—representing the black snake, their name for the Keystone XL pipeline—through the streets of Rapid City. The goal was to influence evidentiary hearings that were held beginning on July 27 before the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission regarding TransCanada’s permit.

Other First Nations groups pointed out that it is futile to promise something will not occur again when it is not clear why it happened in the first place.

“Until we know what caused the pipeline failure it will be difficult to mitigate any possible reoccurrences and establish a sense of safe operations,” said Fort McMurray #468 First Nation in a statement posted on Facebook on July 17. “Leadership wants to reiterate, that everyone has a responsibility to our environment while respecting the biodiversity and natural filter the muskeg provides to our watersheds above and below surface which has now been impacted.”

After touring the site on July 24 along with ministers from the newly elected New Democratic Party (NDP) provincial government, Fort McMurray No. 468 First Nation Council Member Byron Bates said better communication would be in order, although he did note the cleanup progress.

“I visited the spill site last Friday and it’s much different today,” he told the [Canadian Press](#). “It’s very active, Nexen’s working with us and it’s very encouraging to see the government ministers here today, so we’re very encouraged by that. We’ll look forward to a full incident report and sharing of the information.”

Nexen is a subsidiary of China National Offshore Oil Corp. (CNOOC), which bought it for copy5.1 billion in 2013, according to [Reuters](#). Meanwhile, the pipeline’s installer,

British Columbia–based Surerus Pipeline Inc., has declared that everything was done to the letter and is not at fault.

Surerus “had no involvement in this project after the completion, so whatever Nexen’s doing, they’re doing,” vice president Sean Surerus told [The Globe and Mail](#) on July 21. “The project was completed to the standards. We were the installers. We had no design capacity in the project.”

Nexen has said that those sought-after answers will not be coming soon.

"It's disheartening to see the site here, and it is very disappointing that this has happened," said Nexen CEO Fang Zhi to media after touring the site on July 22.

"This is going to take us some significant time to understand exactly what has happened here," said Ron Bailey, Nexen’s senior vice-president of Canadian operations, according to [CBC News](#). “When I say significant time, we're talking months.”

*Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/08/01/oil-sands-fail-nexen-admits-spill-could-have-gone-undetected-two-weeks-161262>*

## **Proposed LNG plant near Prince Rupert on doorstep of important salmon estuary**

Industrialization could affect First Nations fisheries upstream, study finds

By Randy Shore, Vancouver Sun August 6, 2015



Lelu Island, near Port Edward, is the site for the proposed Pacific Northwest LNG plant.

The proposed location of the Pacific NorthWest LNG plant is right on the doorstep of an exceptionally abundant feeding ground for juvenile salmon.

The Flora Bank “is like Grand Central Station for salmon,” said Allen Gottesfeld, head scientist for the Skeena Fisheries Commission.

The Lelu Island liquefied natural gas plant site near Prince Rupert is in the heart of the Skeena Estuary, at the mouth of the second most productive salmon-producing river in Canada. A study published earlier this year by Gottesfeld in the journal PLOS One noted that sockeye salmon juveniles were two to eight times more abundant in the part of the estuary slated for development.

The provincial government earlier this month passed legislation that lays out a taxation framework for the \$36-billion dollar deal with Malaysia's state-owned energy firm Petronas, which intends to build a plant on Lelu Island, a pipeline to northwest B.C. and develop gas fields.

The Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency is examining the impacts of the plant on Flora Bank and is expected to render a decision this fall.

While eight First Nations have signed agreements on the plant and the pipeline, the project has been the target of legal action by the Gitga'at First Nation, unhappy they were excluded from consultation process. Earlier this year, the Lax Kw'alaams First Nation rejected a \$1.15-billion benefits package from the company and province in three community votes. In a written statement, the Lax Kw'alaams said it was open to LNG development, but not close to Flora Bank.

But that may just be the beginning.

A letter published today in the academic journal Science — supported by the most recent research on salmon abundance in the estuary — suggests a “troubling blind spot” in Canada's environmental decision-making. Industrialization reduces salmon survival, which would affect constitutionally protected aboriginal fishing rights far inland including First Nations not consulted by governments and proponents of the project.

More than 40 salmon populations harvested by at least 10 First Nations rely on the Skeena's estuary habitat, an area that would be altered by the Petronas terminal, said Jonathan Moore, a professor at Simon Fraser University and lead author of the letter, written with Gottesfeld and other scientists and First Nations leaders.

At least five First Nations not consulted in the planning process for Pacific NorthWest LNG could be affected by reduced salmon abundance, he said.

“This plant will affect fisheries and people as far as salmon can swim, hundreds and hundreds of kilometres upstream,” said Moore. “Those risks are not being considered right now.”

Lake Babine — 350 kilometres up the Skeena River — is a spawning area for millions of sockeye in peak return years.

“The new data from the estuary is evidence that the proposed LNG terminal could pose risks to our fish and fisheries,” said Donna Macintyre, a co-author of the letter and



fisheries director for Lake Babine Nation, one of the potentially affected nations not consulted in the plant planning process.

A 2003 study by researchers at the University of Washington found that industrialized estuaries showed chinook salmon survival three times lower compared with pristine estuaries, Moore explained.

“The science suggests that (Lelu Island) is the worst place the plant could be out of the locations we’ve examined,” said Moore. “And in the case of the First Nations, if you can be affected by the consequences of the development you should be involved in the decision-making.”

**Direct Link:**

<http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Proposed+plant+near+Prince+Rupert+doorstep+important+salmon+estuary/11270864/story.html>

## **Land Claims & Treaty Rights**

### **SNC-Lavalin teams with First Nations group on proposed B.C. oil refinery**

BRENT JANG

VANCOUVER — The Globe and Mail

Published Friday, Jul. 31, 2015 1:00PM EDT

Last updated Friday, Jul. 31, 2015 6:37PM EDT

Engineering firm SNC-Lavalin Group Inc. is teaming up with a firm co-owned by a former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations for preliminary work on a proposed B.C. oil refinery.

A-in-Chut Business Group, jointly owned by Shawn Atleo, has formed a partnership with SNC-Lavalin to do pre-engineering studies for Pacific Future Energy.

Pacific Future Energy’s goal is to process tar-like bitumen from Alberta at a plant to be built near Prince Rupert, B.C., and export refined petroleum products to Asia by tanker. Company officials say the risk to the environment would be much lower than exporting bitumen in tankers.

Stockwell Day, a former federal international trade minister, is Pacific Future Energy’s senior adviser, while Robert Delamar serves as the company’s chief executive officer.

Mike Bonshor is co-owner of A-in-Chut Business Group with Mr. Atleo, who joined Pacific Future Energy's management team in December in the role of senior adviser of partnerships.

"This refinery will be transformative and innovative in both the approach and the technology," Mr. Bonshor said in a statement on Friday. "First and foremost, we recognize and respect the role of First Nations and their rights and title in resource development."

A-in-Chut Business Group describes itself as "a First Nation business and investment group focused on supporting and empowering First Nations to create and build sustainable economic development based on rights and title."

Mr. Delamar said that having First Nations as full partners is crucial.

"We also believe that community support must be earned before – not after – finalizing our plans," he said. "For one of Canada's oldest engineering firms to agree with this approach and work with A-in-Chut Business Group to invest in this development process is a strong vote of confidence."

Industry analysts are skeptical about B.C. refining plans, citing heated competition among foreign plants and the shipping costs to get to consuming markets in Asia that already have refineries in place.

But SNC-Lavalin CEO Robert Card said his firm will be assisting in developing one of the most energy-efficient refineries yet built. "This project will help open up Asian markets for Canada's energy sector, while building key infrastructure on Canada's West Coast."

The project is aiming to limit carbon emissions at low levels as it strives to process bitumen into refined products, such as diesel, gasoline and jet fuel.

Pacific Future Energy officials say they are committed to consulting and accommodating First Nations. Ovide Mercredi, another former national chief of the Assembly of First Nations, has served on the company's advisory board since December.

Pacific Future Energy hopes to launch operations in 2023.

Newspaper publisher David Black's rival Kitimat Clean oil refinery project has targeted an opening date in 2022.

A third proposal, Eagle Spirit Energy, wants to refine bitumen into finished products either in Alberta or northeast B.C. before piping the material to the West Coast for export. All three ventures still need to attract investors and commodity buyers.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/first-nations-group-partners-with-snc-lavalin-for-bc-refinery-project/article25800248/>

## TransCanada deal aims to undermine Energy East protest movement

By [Jenny Uechi](#) in [News](#) | July 31st 2015



Grand Chief Warren White and Energy East Pipeline President François Poirier shake hands during a traditional ceremony in the sacred roundhouse of the Wauzhushk Onigum community, near Kenora, Ont.

A new agreement signed by pipeline giant TransCanada with a group representing Ontario First Nations has raised alarms that the oil and gas industry is trying to buy social license in order to build its Energy East pipeline.

Grand Council Treaty 3 — representing 21 First Nations across Ontario — entered into a [Communication Engagement and Funding Agreement \(CEFA\)](#) with TransCanada, in which the company would pay \$717,500 over 2015 and 2016 for communications and engagement relating to Energy East.

TransCanada [called](#) the agreement a "first important step," though Grand Chief Warren White (Ogichidaa) of Ontario's Anishinaabe Nation said in a news release that it doesn't mean Council is on board with the pipeline project.

"We aren't agreeing to the project at this stage," White said in a news release. "We are simply sharing information and listening to the people. We are entering into this agreement for the people and we will listen to the people and the elders in the four areas of our nation."

Some, however, are concerned by sections in the agreement suggesting that signatories must not support protests that prevent physical access to territory by TransCanada staff or contractors hired to work on Energy East.

"Two of the most alarming features of it is: one, this clause that talks about forbidding Grand Council Treaty 3 from supporting anyone who may engage in a protest against Energy East, which kind of stacks them up on one side at the very beginning of the consultation process," said Alex Hundert, a media liaison for Grassroots Indigenous Water Defence's [Anishinaabe Water Walk](#).

He referred to section 4.2(e) of the agreement, which states:

"To not support any member of GCT3 (Grand Council Treaty 3) or other individual group, in deliberately physically interfering, in a matter contrary to applicable law, with the lawful use of the Project Area or the Facilities by Energy East or its representatives."

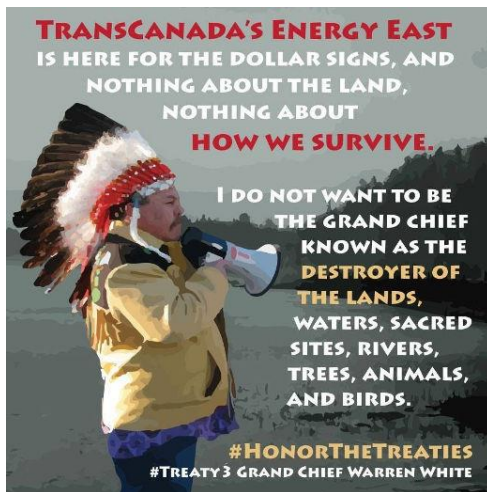
Another section states that in the event of a dispute, nothing can prevent Energy East from immediately accessing the project area for maintenance, operation and repair.

The Energy East pipeline, if built, would become the largest pipeline in North America and the third-largest such pipeline globally. It would carry 1.1 million barrels of oil sands and Bakken petroleum products across six provinces and through the territory of 180 First Nations.

The project has encountered significant opposition in communities including Grassy Narrows, north of Kenora, where First Nations suffer from the effects of ongoing industrial [mercury dumping](#) in the area's waterways 40 years ago, which undermined fishing and tourism businesses in the area.

## A "flawed" consultation process

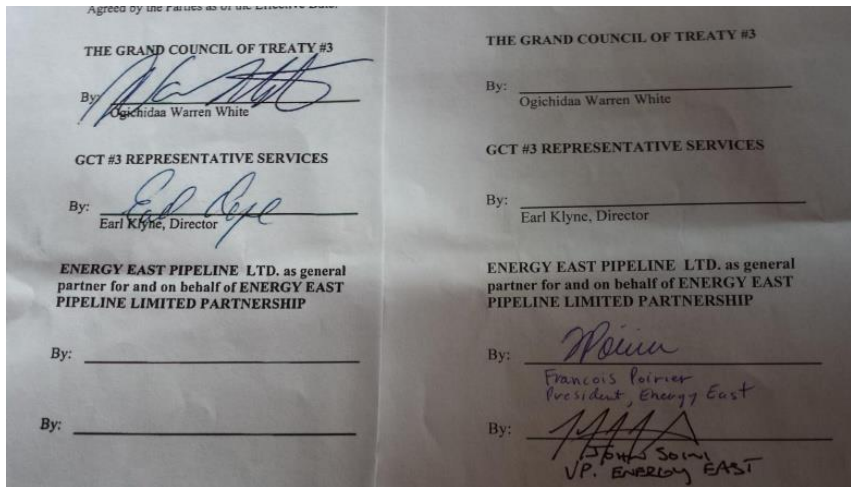
Grand Chief Warren White has been a vocal critic of the Energy East. At a hearing in Kenora, Ontario, on Jan. 13, he denounced it as being "here for the dollar signs and nothing about the land."



A meme featuring Treaty 3 Grand Chief Warren White, after negotiations between the Treaty 3 Grand Council and TransCanada fell apart in early 2015.

TransCanada stated on its website that the agreement it just signed with Grand Chief White and the Grand Council "means we will be able to show why Energy East is important to communities along its route and the measures our teams will take to protect the land and water."

Back in January, the company was accused of using "divide and conquer" and "delaying tactics" in order to win support, according to the [Kenora Daily Miner and News](#).



Signature of Community Engagement and Funding Agreement from Grand Chief Warren White

Clayton Thomas-Muller, Indigenous climate campaigner with 350.org and member of the Mathias Colomb Cree Nation, said the new agreement is a sign that industry is stepping into a role that should have been handled by the federal government.

"It's a clear, glaring example of the fundamentally flawed First Nations consultative process here in Canada," Thomas-Muller said. "There are no set standards for consultation."

He said the federal government neglected its fiduciary and legal obligation to consult First Nations, and that it handed this role to corporations instead of providing resources needed for meaningful discussions between the two parties.

"When you have a corporation — the proponent of the project — doling out money for the consultations, then inexplicable things can happen in terms of ways they can influence, or put pressure on communities," Thomas-Muller said.

"It should really be the federal government stepping up and helping to do the consultations that's defined by laws here. They have to start consulting at the inception of the idea, not years into the conceptualization of the process, which is what this current situation is."

Thomas-Muller will be joining the [Anishinaabe Water Walk](#), an upcoming week-long Energy East protest starting on August 2. The walk follows the pipeline route.

Speaking on behalf of Grand Council Treaty 3, territorial planning unit director Jeffrey Ross insisted TransCanada would not have any unfair advantage in talks about Energy East, and said the timelines and scope of the meetings were mutually agreed upon.

"We're just sharing information," he said. "The big part about this is that Energy East has agreed to respect Grand Council and the territory."

Ross said in May 2014, Grand Council approached TransCanada about Energy East and wanted to engage in discussions. He said Treaty 3 chiefs authorized the plan to begin an engagement process because they needed more information on the project.

Thomas-Muller argued that First Nations may be under pressure to accept agreements with TransCanada, given the Harper government's [budget cuts](#) to Grand Council Treaty 3, which forced chiefs to lay off police officers in 2013.

## Room for dissent?

Despite assurances that negotiations will be fair, some people in First Nation communities along the Energy East route are worried that certain sections of the agreement will undermine their ability to express dissent.

Hundert also worried that since the funding is coming from TransCanada, consultants or experts hired for the process would be supportive of the project, while critical views go unheard.

Ross disagreed.

"I think that's going to be a huge part of our discussion," he said. "Of course, we want to hear their opinion, but moreover, we want to hear if they have the correct information. Where are they getting the information from? We want to make sure everyone in the nation has the right information — not just something that's part of the agenda of some environmental advocacy group."

Referring to the Anishinaabe Water Walk protest, he continued:

"The engagement officer and myself will join the walk ourselves just to engage with some of the group members there."

Ross acknowledged that there is a clause in the agreement that protesters can't physically block the Energy East pipeline or prevent contract workers from doing their job. However, he suggested that critical views would be welcome so that Energy East can first identify, then mitigate where the project impacts Aboriginal treaty rights.

Grassy Narrows resident and mother Chrissy Swain said she was concerned about the pipeline's impact on the waterways, and how it might affect the community's health in the event of an oil leak.

"Something like that already happened to us with the mercury poisoning — we're still struggling to get them to clean up the mess," Swain said. "If a spill happens here, will people try to sweep it under the rug again? There's still a small percentage of water here that's left clean. We still live off this land."

TransCanada spokesperson Tim Duboyce did not respond to questions about the Grand Council Treaty 3 agreement, but sent an email with links and bullet points from the company website, stating that the company has held over 1,700 meetings with First Nations and that "fostering strong, long-term relationships with Aboriginal communities is...an integral part of everything we do at TransCanada."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.nationalobserver.com/2015/07/31/news/transcanada-funds-first-nations-engagement-meetings-over-energy-east-pipeline>

## **N.W.T.'s 'Bush University' teaches land-claim skills**

The Canadian Press  
July 31, 2015 09:23 AM

**YELLOWKNIFE** - A unique Arctic college is starting a program aimed at giving aboriginal people the skills they need to negotiate, implement and monitor land claims.

"This is to teach people the fundamental things that they would be responsible for in their nations in terms of managing and decision-making," said Erin Freeland-Ballantyne of Dechinta, a "bush university" north of Yellowknife that puts land-based education at the centre of its programs.

First Nations are taking on more and more responsibility for their lands and need the education to back that up, Freeland-Ballantyne said.

"There needs to be more programming about mobilizing the inherent rights and responsibility to land — but also how to work toward equal partnerships and good relationships with other aboriginal governments, with industry, with environmental groups."

The program is wide-ranging and includes everything from governance systems to basic research techniques.



Recent co-management deals such as the one between Parks Canada and the Lutsel K'e Dene for the proposed Thaidene Nene National Park in the N.W.T. show that arrangements with greater aboriginal input are becoming more common, said Freeland-Ballantyne.

"There's so many ways to get nations out on the land enacting their traditional and contemporary responsibilities to land and to each other. It creates an industry where people are sharing their cultural values with guests while also ensuring that whoever's on their land is taking care of the land in a way that ensures its integrity."

Dechinta, accredited through the University of Alberta, is to begin Monday as a pilot with 10 students for three semesters. It will be offered as a minor through the native studies program.

Dechinta will offer 12 courses. Core studies will include community governance, health and wellness and community research methodologies.

Students will work with elders and spend extended time on the land putting lessons into practise.

- See more at: <http://www.squamishchief.com/n-w-t-s-bush-university-teaches-land-claim-skills-1.2018015#sthash.HCjz4x2r.dpuf>

## **Energy East pipeline opposed by Anishinaabe Water Walkers**

**'We have the small percentage of clean water that's left in this world here in this area'**

[CBC News](#) Posted: Aug 05, 2015 6:00 AM ET Last Updated: Aug 05, 2015 10:51 AM ET



The Anishinaabe Water Walk protesting the Energy East pipeline will cover 125 kilometres of the proposed route between Dryden Ont. and the Manitoba boundary. (submitted by Alex Hundert)

A group of First Nations activists in Treaty 3 territory in northwestern Ontario are walking 125 kilometres of the proposed Energy East pipeline route to demonstrate their opposition to TransCanada's plan to convert the natural gas pipeline to transport oil.

The walk began at Eagle Lake First Nation, near Dryden, Ont., on Monday and is expected to arrive at Shoal Lake 39 First Nation, west of Kenora, Ont. on Saturday.

Chrissy Swain, from Grassy Narrows First Nation, said she is concerned about the safety of the pipeline and the potential any leaks will harm lakes and rivers.

"We have the small percentage of clean water that's left in this world here in this area," she said.

Swain said the issue is especially important to her, a mother of three small children who has [seen the impact of mercury contamination at Grassy Narrows](#).



"Our Anishinaabe laws and values tell us everything we need to know about Energy East, that is why we say no," says Shoal Lake 39 Chief Fawn Wapioke (left). (submitted by Alex Hundert)

"It's my responsibility also as an Anishinaabe woman to protect that water for my children so that they can have life too," she said.

## **'Engagement' agreement**

A news release from TransCanada on July 29 announced the company had an "engagement" agreement with Grand Council Treaty 3.

A First Nations working group will now review TransCanada's application with the National Energy Board.

In the news release, Treaty 3 Grand Chief Warren White said the agreement does not mean that Treaty 3 supports the project, only that they will "share information and listen to the people."

At least one Treaty 3 chief is openly opposed to the pipeline. Shoal Lake 39 First Nation Chief Fawn Wapioke is taking part in the water walk.

"Water is life," she said in a news release at the start of the walk. "Our Anishinaabe laws and values tell us everything we need to know about Energy East that is why we say no."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/thunder-bay/energy-east-pipeline-opposed-by-anishinaabe-water-walkers-1.3179107>

## **Approving uranium project will only alienate Nunavut Inuit: Mining Watch**

**"Inuit would rightfully feel like their voice does not matter"**

NUNATSIAQ NEWS, August 05, 2015 - 1:05 pm



Areva Resources Canada's office in Baker Lake, about 80 kilometres from the company's proposed Kiggavik uranium project site. (FILE PHOTO)

Mining Watch Canada is urging the federal government to take the advice of the Nunavut Impact Review Board, which advised that a Nunavut uranium project should not move forward for now.

The mining watchdog group sent a July 28 letter to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Minister Bernard Valcourt, asking him to uphold [the NIRB's decision on Areva Resources Canada's Kiggavik mine proposal](#).

Mining Watch's letter comes just weeks after [Areva asked the federal government to reject the NIRB's report](#), which recommends the proposed uranium project not go ahead because of the company's lack of firm start date.

“It is entirely inappropriate for a proponent to propose a major mining project without any start date, let alone wait until after a review has concluded to bring forward vital arguments and information related to substantial community concerns,” said Ugo Lapointe, Canadian program co-ordinator at Mining Watch Canada, said in a news release.

“Overturning the NIRB recommendation would serve to further alienate Aboriginal peoples from regulatory processes, and erode trust between Inuit and the mining industry in Nunavut,” Lapointe added. “Inuit would rightfully feel like their voice does not matter, despite the existence of a negotiated land claim agreement.”

In its letter, Mining Watch says that Areva had “no substantive engagement with community concerns regarding the start date until after the final hearings.”

Mining Watch also says Areva’s suggestion that Kiggavik should be approved because a review of TMAC Resources’ Hope Bay gold project continued despite the lack of a firm start date does not hold up, because there was little public concern expressed around that project in general.

The organization notes that community concerns around the Kiggavik project were much broader than just the project’s start date.

“The lack of a project commencement date only serves to amplify these other sources of uncertainty,” the Mining Watch letter said.

That’s not to mention the depressed uranium market and Areva’s financial standing, which Mining Watch describes as “technically bankrupt” since the company’s share dropped 90 per cent from its peak value in 2007.

“Accordingly, there appears to be no rationale for your ministry to not accept the NIRB recommendation,” the letter addressed to Valcourt said.

Earlier this month, Quebec’s environmental impact review board released a report following a province-wide commission [that said it would be “premature” to allow the uranium sector to develop in Quebec](#), given the lack of both information and social acceptance on the issue.

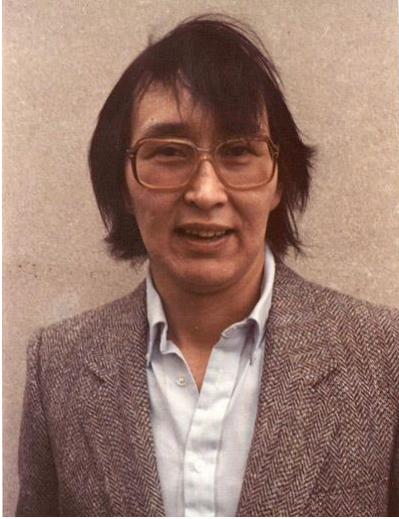
**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674approving\\_uranium\\_project\\_will\\_only\\_alienate\\_nunavut\\_inuit\\_mining\\_watch/](http://www.nunatsiaqonline.ca/stories/article/65674approving_uranium_project_will_only_alienate_nunavut_inuit_mining_watch/)

## **Nunavut mourns Bobby Kadlun, land claims negotiator**

## **“We got Nunavut, eh?”**

SARAH ROGERS, August 05, 2015 - 2:05 pm



Bobby Kadlun, pictured here in this undated file photo, died this past weekend at 61. (FILE PHOTO)

Bobby Kadlun, one of Nunavut’s most tenacious land claim negotiators, has died.

Kadlun died this past weekend in his hometown, the western Nunavut community of Kugluktuk. He was 61.

In an Aug. 4 statement, Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. called Kadlun’s commitment to Inuit rights “fearless.”

“From his beginnings with the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and the guiding role he played in the formation and leadership of the Tungavik Federation of Nunavut, Bobby had a reputation as being a negotiator who got what he wanted,” said NTI president Cathy Towtongie.

“He was my personal friend and I often thought about his negotiating skills,” she said. “His efforts ensured that Inuit have a territory to call home.”

Kadlun left a job on oil drilling rigs in the mid-1970s to work for Inuit Tapirisat of Canada, which at the time had started land claims negotiations with the federal government.

He was only 24 when he began working as a negotiator at the regional level, in the Kitikmeot, where he later went on to serve as president of the Kitikmeot Inuit Association.

By 1982, Kadlun and his colleagues went on to form the Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut — the forerunner to Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. — whose sole mandate was to negotiate the Nunavut land claims agreement.

As part of [NTI's oral history project](#), interviewer Holly Dobbins spoke to Kadlun in 2004, asking him about that time in his career.

“When we started TFN, do you know what it stood for?” Kadlun asked his interviewer. “Tough F\*ckin’ Negotiators.”

Kadlun, known for his humour and determination, said he learned his negotiating skill “on the job.”

In an introduction to her transcribed interview, Dobbins notes that “one thing that a simple transcript cannot capture is the mischievousness that exudes from the man, that and humour,” she wrote.

“His wit is dry, and he is a master storyteller who uses his hands, face and body to tell a story as much as he uses his words.”

During the 2004 interview, Dobbins described Kadlun as thin from illness: a suicide attempt in the 1990s had weakened him and forced him to pull away from his work.

But Kadlun made clear his love of politics and the land he grew up in.

“To get a good deal you’ve got to encourage political changes as well, right, especially if the [federal government] wants extinguishment [of rights],” he said in the 2004 interview.

“I was totally, totally opposed to extinguishment. If you want extinguishment, then we’ve got to change it. And basically, that’s the deal right. It kind of happened in that way.”

“So, signing it, did you think you had done a good deal?” asked his interviewer.

“Yeah,” he replied. “We got Nunavut, eh?”

“What do you want people to remember the most about you?” Dobbins asked later on in the interview.

“I’ve never thought about it,” Kadlun replied.

“Shall I tell you what other people have told me about you? ‘One of the most steady guys,’ ‘Sharp as a tack’ or ‘probably one of the smartest negotiators,’” she said.

“Sounds pretty good,” Kadlun said.

A funeral service for Kadlun was to be held in Kugluktuk Aug. 5.

**Direct Link:**

[http://www.nunatsiagonline.ca/stories/article/65674Nunavut\\_mourns\\_bobby\\_kadlun\\_lan\\_d\\_claims\\_negotiator/](http://www.nunatsiagonline.ca/stories/article/65674Nunavut_mourns_bobby_kadlun_lan_d_claims_negotiator/)

## **First Nations file suit against Site C permits**

[William Stodalka](#) / Alaska Highway News  
August 6, 2015 08:56 AM



West Moberly First Nation, whose Chief, Roland Willson is seen here, put forward a petition to the court against permits issued for the Site C dam. Photo By File

Two Treaty 8 First Nations, Prophet River and West Moberly, are seeking to quash environmental permits issued by the B.C. government for the Site C dam.

Site C requires a number of permits under a variety of provincial and federal legislation before it can begin certain stages of construction.

According to the petition brought forward by the First Nations, there are at least 36 permits to do things such as cut down trees in certain areas, collect fish, destroy beaver dams, remove bald eagle nests, and more.

The petitioners say that in November 2012, BC Hydro told the two First Nations that it intended to apply for the permits before the environmental assessment process – which would determine if the project was environmentally “OK” or not – was over.

They supposedly referred to this as “synchronized permitting.”



The First Nations did not go for this because it would divide their resources and they felt it would be premature to do so. BC Hydro and the provincial government agreed to postpone consultation until later.

In the spring of 2015, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and the First Nations agreed to negotiate a custom consultation process on these permits.

Last April, they signed an agreement to guide the negotiation of the custom consultation process.

That custom consultation process agreement was not finalized, the petition to the court states.

On May 29, Treaty 8 was informed that the B.C. government wanted to conclude consultation on these higher-priority permits by June 5.

This raised concerns for the First Nations, since it would conclude consultation before the First Nations had concluded their independent technical review.

In the document, they state that completing an independent technical review as required by the negotiation agreement “would take at least three months and as long as a year.”

On July 7, the BC government told the two First Nations that they had approved certain permits.

The petitions argue that by issuing these permits before completing a consultation process set out in the negotiation agreement, there was not enough time for the First Nation to prepare a complete response regarding the potential adverse effects of the permits on treaty rights to hunt and fish.

In addition to quashing the permits, the two bands are seeking an injunction from performing any work pursuant to the permits until the petition is heard and decided by the court.

Two of these permits include an occupant licence to cut along the north bank of the Peace River for the dam. Work for that was recently awarded to Morgan Construction, an Alberta-based company.

On July 31, Dave Conway, a BC Hydro spokesman, wrote that “some initial clearing activities on the north bank are underway.”

Calls to the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations were not returned as of press time.

BC Hydro declined comment.

The petition gives Hydro and the Ministry 21 days to respond.

Calls to West Moberly First Nation Chief Roland Willson and his law firm asking for comment were not returned as of press time.

This is a second legal challenge brought forward by these two First Nations against the province.

The first was against the environmental assessment certificate for the dam, which allowed overall construction to begin.

- See more at: <http://www.alaskahighwaynews.ca/regional-news/site-c/first-nations-file-suit-against-site-c-permits-1.2022730#sthash.SgLoHueP.dpuf>

## Special Topic: International Indigenous Populations

### 'Native American re-enactors' in 5k race leave internet incredulous

**Kentucky race promised participants the chance to be chased by 'Indian attackers' at the finish line**

By Lauren O'Neil, [CBC News](#) Posted: Jul 30, 2015 2:55 PM ET Last Updated: Jul 30, 2015 6:03 PM ET



A man dressed as an "Indian attacker" is seen after chasing participants to the finish line at Harrodsburg, Ky.'s annual James Ray 5K race in 2014. (Facebook/FitnessEDGE/Fusion)

The organizers of an annual race in Kentucky are coming under fire this week as news spreads of their intention to have "native American re-enactors" chase participants to the finish line.

Set to take place on Aug. 15, the James Ray 5K is part of the [Pioneer Days Festival](#) at Harrodsburg, Ky., a "family community event" meant to help locals connect with their "heritage as the 1st pioneer settlement west of the Alleghenies," according to the Mercer County Chamber of Commerce.

Twitter began buzzing about the race Wednesday after several high-profile users shared links to an article promoting the race in the [Central Kentucky News-Journal](#).

"It's not every day you can find a 5K — or any race — where American Indians reenactors will chase you to the finish line," the piece, which was published Monday, reads. "Yet that's exactly what you'll get Aug. 15 at the James Ray 5K — Indian Attack in Harrodsburg."

Contrary to what many on Twitter have suggested, the article is not satirical or fake.

In fact, the 5K with "Indian attackers" took place last year in a similar fashion, as [a poster](#) uploaded to the event's Facebook page in July of 2014 shows:



'First peek! A new and improved James Ray 5K,' read the caption on this photo, uploaded to Pioneer Days of Mercer County Kentucky Facebook page in 2014. (Pioneer Days of Mercer County Kentucky/Facebook)

The News-Journal's coverage of the race ahead of this year's Pioneer Days Festival confirms that 2015 will be the second time re-enactors will chase runners near the finish line.

"We're getting set up for this again," [race director Terry Wasson](#) told the newspaper. "The (American Indians re-enactors) will chase runners, and it seemed to be something that everybody really enjoyed last year. It was a big hit and came off as unique as we had hoped it would."

A [news article](#) from last year's festival contains one image of two re-enactors chasing race participants with the caption, "Dressed as Native Americans, Kayla Slone and Nick Laymon swoop down on 73-year-old Harold Lanham on Saturday near the James Ray 5K finish line."

After nearly 24 hours of being pelted with criticism from Twitter users describing the race as [racist](#), [supportive of reface](#), and as "[the epitome of a bad idea](#)," the Pioneer Days of Mercer County Kentucky Facebook page addressed the issue Thursday morning:

"All concerns expressed on the James Ray 5 K have been heard and the race has been altered accordingly," reads [the most recent post](#) in its feed.

The Mercer County Chamber of Commerce also posted the following message on [its website](#):

*"The Mercer Chamber of Commerce and the Pioneer Days Festival Committee, after being made aware of an inappropriate reference to Native Americans in a story and advertisement published in the Advocate Messenger, has pulled all references to Native Americans in its print and internet media. All sponsors of any event held in conjunction with Pioneer Days has been reviewed and asked to remove all references to Native Americans in its print and internet media."*

While both messages indicate that materials have been changed, as of Thursday afternoon, the race's [2015 registration form](#) remains online and accessible to the public.

"You can either run or walk, but don't be surprised if you encounter some obstacles and come under attack when Indians chase you to the finish!" reads the form, which is titled "JAMES RAY 5K - 'Indian Attack'"

Pioneer Days  
**JAMES RAY 5K - "Indian Attack"**

Saturday, August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2015 - 8:00 A.M.

You can either run or walk, but don't be surprised if you encounter some obstacles and come under attack when Indians chase you to the finish! Show your pioneer spirit by coming in costume. Awards will be presented for over-all male and female winners and for best costume! Additional chances for prizes will be found along the route.

**The Course:** Start/finish line will be on S. Chiles Street in Harrodsburg, just down from MainSource Bank. The race will take you out Beaumont Avenue, circling to return the same way. You may park at MainSource Bank.

**Race Day:** Packet pickup and registration will be from 7:00 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. in the parking lot of MainSource bank located at 104 S. Chiles St., Harrodsburg. T-shirts and goodie bags are guaranteed to pre-registered participants. Race will be held rain or shine.



Presented by:



**Registration Fee**  
Thru August 3<sup>rd</sup>, \$15  
After August 3<sup>rd</sup>, \$20

**Age Divisions**

Under 13	13-19
20-29	30-39
40-49	50-59

**Make Check Payable To:** SBC Mission Team

**Mail To:**  
SBC Mission Team  
347 Pleasant Hill Dr.  
Harrodsburg, KY 40330  
c/o Terry Wasson

**Drop off at:**  
Cash-A-Check (next to Sonic)  
Blue Moon Café (on Main St.)  
Fitness Edge (900 S. College St.)  
Mercer Dental (135 Collins Dr.)

**For more Information Contact:**

The registration form for the James Ray 5K as seen online Thursday afternoon at 2 p.m. ET (Mercer County Chamber of Commerce)

At least one of the race's sponsors has also removed evidence of last year's re-enactors from its own Facebook page.

The photo below, saved [by the Fusion](#) website before it was deleted, appeared in [an album on FitnessEDGE's page](#) until about 11 a.m. ET on Thursday according to the post's edit history.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.cbc.ca/news/trending/native-american-re-enactors-in-5k-race-leave-internet-incredulous-1.3174153>

## **Gov. Herbert celebrates 10-year anniversary of Native American summit**

Posted 6:37 pm, July 30, 2015, by [Tamara Vaifanua](#)

OREM, Utah – Gov. Gary Herbert gathered with eight Utah tribal leaders Thursday at Utah Valley University to celebrate a partnership they brokered 10 years ago to create a Native American summit.

“I think our Native American summit has fostered better dialogue and better understanding, which is going to give us better outcomes in the future,” Herbert said.

The Navajo Nation hosted this year’s gathering. Their theme centered around the Navajo word, Hozho, which means living life in balance and harmony.

It’s a goal Governor Herbert strives for as he helps tribal leaders improve living conditions on reservations.

“What we want to do first and foremost, is help them help themselves,” Herbert said.

The governor said the state is working closely with tribes to provide more jobs, better access to health care and educational opportunities. He said some of their efforts are slowly paying off.

“Our graduation rates, which were very low for the Native Americans, which was around 50 percent graduating from High School, way too low, but now they’re at 65,” Herbert said. “That’s still way too low, but it’s still a significant improvement.”

Tribal leaders are investing in their future by educating their youth.

One hundred teens from various tribes are also part of the summit experience.

“There are seminars here for kids to talk about engineering, health care—really to get them thinking about what career goals they want to do, to encourage them to seek an education beyond high school,” said Geoffrey Fattah, communications director for the Utah Department of Heritage & Art.

Older tribal members hope the younger ones will take these lessons to heart.

“The summit is to exchange ideas and to educate the youth so they become leaders. They’ll be able to know the different resources that are out there,” said Rios Pacheco, a member of the Northwestern Shoshone and Santo Domingo Pueblo tribes.

Pacheco commends state leaders for organizing the summit. He says other states don’t hold gatherings like this, which benefit both parties because they have an open dialogue.

The summit wraps up on Friday.

**Direct Link:** <http://fox13now.com/2015/07/30/gov-herbert-celebrates-10-year-anniversary-of-native-american-summit/>

## **Native American family attacked in deadly shooting on Montana highway**

- Couple killed and daughter wounded after stopping to help motorist
- Jesus Yeizon Deniz, 18, charged with murder on Crow Reservation



Law enforcement agents investigate the scene of a shooting in Pryor, Montan, on the Crow Reservation on Wednesday. Photograph: Casey Page/AP

[Jessica Glenza](#) in New York and agencies

Friday 31 July 2015 18.32 BST Last modified on Monday 3 August 2015 10.48 BST



Three members of a large Native American family living in the tiny town of Pryor, [Montana](#), were shot, and two killed, while attempting to help what they thought was a motorist stranded on the Crow Reservation.

The three family members, Jason Shane, 51, Tana Shane, 47, and their daughter Jorah Shane, 26, stopped to help what they believed was a driver out of gas on a remote road on Wednesday. But when the three approached the driver's green 1990 Ford Taurus, he pointed a gun at them, demanded money and shot at all three, killing Jason and Tana Shane.

Authorities charged 18-year-old Jesus Yeizon Deniz (also known as Jesus Yeizon Deniz Mendoza) with two counts of murder in federal court after Jorah Shane identified him from a photo. After he was apprehended in Wyoming, he told FBI agents that "he shot the victims because he was getting tired of waiting around, and because the daughter laughed at him".

Jason, Tana and Jorah drove to remote Pryor Gap Road on the western edge of the Crow Reservation after Tana Shane said a driver appeared to be stranded.



Family members embrace at the scene of a shooting in Pryor, Montana. Photograph: Casey Page/AP

Once the three arrived, however, and approached Deniz's Ford sedan, Deniz pointed a .22-caliber rifle at them and told them to get out of the vehicle. Deniz demanded money, but they told him they had none. Deniz then marched the three away from their vehicle, apparently behind them.

Jorah's mother told her daughter in a Native American language to run according to the Associated Press. Jorah told police she then heard a gunshot and turned around to see her father lying on the ground.



Jorah ran, heard her mother scream but didn't turn around because she was too scared. She felt blood running down her face, a gunshot wound, and then felt a bullet strike her back.

She told agents that when she turned around she saw Deniz get into the family's car and drive off.

Jorah began yelling for help, and someone from the nearby St Charles mission school drove to her. She told the driver she was hurt, and the driver walked to her parents, both lying face-down on the ground.

Terrified the shooter would return, Jorah got behind the wheel of the car that had responded to her calls for help and drove to her sister's home, a short distance away, and she was taken to the hospital.

"Both my brother and sister-in-law have big hearts," Jorah's aunt Ada Shane told the AP, about why the couple went to help Deniz. "They're always helping someone else."

The Shanes leave behind five daughters and two sons, the [Billings Gazette](#) reported. The youngest of their children graduated from high school this year, the report said.

Deniz was later found in Meeteetse, Wyoming, by a Park County sheriff's deputy. Deniz is charged with two counts of murder in the US district court of Montana Billings. A hearing is scheduled for Friday, the AP reported.

*The Associated Press contributed to this report.*

**Direct Link:** <http://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/jul/31/native-american-family-shooting-montana-highway>

## **Couple Allegedly Set Homeless Native American Man on Fire, Police Say**

[Sheena Louise Roetman](#)

7/30/15

A homeless Native American man remains in intensive care for serious burns he sustained after an Albuquerque, New Mexico, couple allegedly tossed lighted fireworks on him as he slept, setting him ablaze, according to police.

Joshua Benavidez and Irene Enriquez, both 31, were taken into police custody on July 22 after neighbors identified their purple Chevy Tahoe as the one seen in surveillance video released by police.



Twitter.com

According to the [Albuquerque Journal](#), the homeless Native American man, Ruben Abeita, was asleep on the curb at about 8 p.m. on July 11 when the couple hurled fireworks at him, causing his clothing to catch fire. Enriquez said she wanted to help Abeita once she saw his clothing had been ignited, but that Benavidez prevented her from doing so and then fled the scene.

Neighbors also told police that the SUV had been painted white in recent days after the incident, according to [KOB4](#), and although Benavidez told police he had sold a white Tahoe to “some Hispanic guy,” he had no paperwork to corroborate his story.

The couple’s 10-year-old son confirmed the story to police, saying he had been in the car with his 12-year-old stepbrother and two-year-old sister at the time and witnessed the attack.

Both Benavidez, who was on probation at the time of arrest for aggravated assault on a peace officer and tampering with evidence, and Enriquez are being held on a copy00,000 bond each. Both are charged with three counts of child abuse and two counts of contributing to the delinquency of a minor, as well as aggravated battery with great bodily harm, tampering with evidence and conspiracy.

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/07/30/couple-allegedly-set-homeless-native-american-man-fire-police-say-161248>

## Congress Must Rebuild Trust With Native American Tribes

[Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva](#)

7/22/15

Ask any Native American tribe for a story about working with Congress and you'll probably hear a story of frustration. There are too many examples to count of Washington not taking tribal sovereignty seriously, ignoring trust and treaty responsibilities, and failing to protect Native American historical treasures. Even the local football team is insensitive to Native People.

Unfortunately, much of this is based not on legitimate political differences but on a prevailing attitude that Native American history is important only when it is convenient, Native American economic interests are secondary and Native American land is held by tribes only through the grace and favor of the federal government.

This attitude has spilled out into the open several times on Capitol Hill in recent days. Rather than slowly getting better, Congress' treatment of Indian Country seems to be getting worse.

When President Obama, using the time-honored Antiquities Act signed into law by Teddy Roosevelt, established three new national monuments on July 10 in Nevada, California and Texas, the protection of Native American art and artifacts was among his top priorities. Basin and Range National Monument in southeastern Nevada will protect petroglyph and prehistoric rock art dating back thousands of years. In the conservation community, not to mention the Native American community, this was an occasion to celebrate.

House Republicans, however, were not celebrating. When a reporter asked for his views on the new monuments and pointed out the rich Native American history involved, Natural Resources Committee Chairman Rob Bishop of Utah replied, "Ah, bull crap. That's not an antiquity." Earlier that same day, a release from the Chairman stated, "There is nothing that [President] Obama did today that had anything to do with an antiquity."

This was not an isolated incident. Representative Don Young, who chairs the Committee's panel on Indian, Insular and Alaska Native Affairs, lectured representatives of the Zuni Pueblo and Navajo Nation at a July 15 hearing about accepting whatever decision Congress made on a land dispute at Fort Wingate, New Mexico. "Either you take what we're going to give you and be happy, or you're going to lose it," he told them. "You better be happy with what you're going to get."

In April, the Majority convened a subcommittee hearing that should have occasioned an objective discussion of new tribal recognition standards proposed by the Obama Administration. The Majority decided to call it *The Obama Administration's Part 83 Revisions and How They May Allow the Interior Department to Create Tribes, not Recognize Them*. Tribes and those seeking tribal recognition deserve better than this kind of rhetoric.

Perhaps most egregiously, last year's National Defense Authorization Act – a bill President Obama could not have easily vetoed – included a shameful provision

mandating a land swap long favored by a mining firm called Resolution Copper, which is co-owned by multinational conglomerates Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton, at the expense of sacred Native American land.

For years, Resolution has sought access to a copper deposit in eastern Arizona at a site called Oak Flat, which has been home to the San Carlos Apache Nation's traditional acorn and medicinal herb collecting and religious ceremonies for centuries. Oak Flat includes some of the Nation's most important cultural and historic land and is near an especially sacred mountain called Apache Leap, where warriors jumped to their deaths rather than allowing themselves to be captured by pursuing U.S. cavalry. For the San Carlos Apache, few sites have equal importance. They fear Apache Leap will collapse or be damaged by the intensive block cave mining Resolution proposes.

Their wishes have been ignored. Last Congress, Republican House leaders had to cancel a vote on a bill forcing the Forest Service to trade the land to Resolution due to lack of support. Undeterred, Arizona's Republican senators snuck a swap provision into the defense bill knowing it would not be easy to remove – or easy for President Obama to reject. Now the San Carlos Apache are facing the imminent prospect of permanent damage to this sacred site.

The line on treating Indian Country with disrespect has to be drawn. On June 17, I introduced the bipartisan Save Oak Flat Act to repeal the land trade while leaving the defense law intact. It's one fight I can truly say I'm proud to lead.

The larger fight to make sure Congress treats Indian Country with the respect it deserves – and to which it is entitled under our laws and any standard of decent governance – will be longer and more difficult. But it's a fight that needs to happen.

*Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva has represented Southern Arizona in Congress since 2003. He is the former chairman of the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands, and is currently the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulations. His district includes the Tohono O'odham Nation, the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, the Cocopah Indian Tribe and part of the Fort Yuma Quechan Tribe.*

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/07/22/congress-must-rebuild-trust-native-american-tribes>

## **Booing of aboriginal athlete sparks heated race debate in Australia**

SYDNEY | By Matt Siegel, Thu Jul 30, 2015 9:20am BST



Aboriginal Australian Football League (AFL) footballer Adam Goodes holds the Commonwealth Games' Queen's Baton at Farm Cove in Sydney's Botanical Gardens January 26, 2006.

Months of relentless booing of Aboriginal football great and anti-racism campaigner Adam Goodes has ignited an uncomfortable public debate in Australia about race and how the country treats its indigenous citizens.

Goodes, a 35-year-old veteran of the popular Australian [Football](#) League (AFL) who was named Australian of the Year in 2014 for his rights work off the field, has twice won the Brownlow Medal as the league's best and fairest player.

Nonetheless he has for years been targeted by spectators, treatment that reached a fever pitch after he mimed throwing a spear at opposing fans during a mid-game celebration in May.

After another tirade of jeers during a game in Perth last weekend, Goodes has decided to take time out from football. He has kept his own counsel on the issue, hoping it will die off if starved of attention.

The unprecedented stream of vitriol has helped to draw attention to one of contemporary Australia's most delicate fault-lines - the often deplorable conditions facing many Aborigines more than two centuries after colonisation.

Those directing their opprobrium at Goodes - in the stands, on Internet comment boards and talk radio - say their target is a unsporting player with a victim mentality.

Many, however, call that a thin veneer for racist behaviour driven by anger over the attention Goodes has consistently drawn to a thorny issue.

"I don't know what else you need to do in Australia to be a good Australian," Andrew [Ireland](#), CEO of Goodes' team the Sydney Swans, told reporters on Thursday.

"What we're talking about is a really complex issue that's currently sitting in the sports area and involves Adam, but I think it's something that constantly is part of Australia, and disappointingly so."

Aboriginal sports stars from other football codes have backed Goodes, vowing to show their support with indigenous dances on the playing field.

Linda Burney, chair of the Australian Rugby League's Indigenous Council and deputy leader of the opposition Labor party in New South Wales state, was quoted as saying in Sydney's Daily Telegraph newspaper that the situation was "bloody ugly".

"I think it is clearly racist and combines with tall poppy syndrome. You have a proud indigenous man who puts his head up ... and this happens," she said, referring to a tendency in Australia to cut successful people down to size.

**"THIS MUST STOP"**

Australia rarely talks publicly about the condition of its roughly 700,000 indigenous citizens, who track near the bottom of its 23 million citizens in almost every economic and social indicator.

Aborigines are 12 times more likely than other Australians to be imprisoned, live 10 years less on average and are nine times as likely to have their children taken away by the state. Alcoholism, drug addiction and suicide are rife.

Addressing these issues has proven tricky. A referendum to recognise Aborigines in the constitution has been on hold for years.

Goodes, whose mother was forcibly removed from home under a government assimilation policy from 1910-1970, has been a lightning rod for criticism.

Many trace the row to a 2013 incident in which he identified a 13-year-old girl in the crowd who called him an "ape", leading to her ejection from the stands. Many saw her as the real victim and have never forgiven Goodes.

Controversial radio shock jock Alan Jones, who has been convicted of inciting racial hatred for his role in a series of race riots in Sydney in 2005, summed up the anger against Goodes.

"You know, the man is always a victim," he told Australia's Channel Seven TV network. "Then he became Australian of the Year and tells us that we're all racists. Every time he speaks, Australia is a racist nation."

New South Wales state Premier Mike Baird has accused hecklers of crossing the line from good-natured ribbing to something much darker.

"There are many things we pride ourselves on as Australians ... and good sportsmanship is right at the top of that list," he wrote on Facebook. "The relentless booing of Adam Goodes breaks this spirit of good sportsmanship. It must stop."

**Direct Link:** <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/07/30/uk-australia-racism-sport-idUKKCN0Q40V920150730>

## Arizona Apache Mobilize Against Bill Which Hands Sacred Native American Land To Mining Company

"This is appalling, this would not happen at any other holy place in the world," a supporter of the resistance movement against the proposed mine tells MintPress News. "If someone tried to extract minerals from the Vatican or from Jerusalem it would be seen as an abomination."

By [Derrick Broze](#) | [August 1, 2015](#)



An Apache activist dancer performs in a rally to save Oak Flat, land near Superior, Ariz., sacred to Western Apache tribes, in front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, Tuesday, July 22, 2015.

**OAK FLAT, Arizona** — The San Carlos Apache Tribe held a celebratory dinner on July 27 to welcome back members of the Apache Stronghold caravan after a two-week journey from the tribe's reservation in Bylas, Arizona, to Washington, D.C. The dinner menu featured a traditional Apache acorn soup and juice squeezed from skunkbush sumac berries — both of which are threatened by a proposed \$6 billion mining operation.

The Apache Stronghold formed in December in response to [a last-minute legislative provision](#) included in the the National Defense Authorization Act of 2015. The provision at issue in the annual Defense Department funding bill grants Resolution Copper Mining, a subsidiary of Australian-English mining giant Rio Tinto, a 2,400-acre land parcel which includes parts of the Tonto National Forest, protected national forest in Arizona where it will create the continent's largest copper mine.



Some of those lands are considered sacred by multiple Native American communities, including the Oak Flat campground. The area is not recognized as part of the San Carlos Apache Reservation, but it has historically been used by the Apache for trading purposes and spiritual ceremonies.

“This is appalling, this would not happen at any other holy place in the world,” Reddog Rudy, an Apache Stronghold supporter with the Xicano, Ute and Pinoy Nations, told MintPress News. “If someone tried to extract minerals from the Vatican or from Jerusalem it would be seen as an abomination.”

The National Environmental Policy Act stipulates that an impact assessment on the environment, archaeological and historic sites, as well as spaces considered sacred by Native Americans, must be completed prior to a land swap. However, under the NDAA 2015, Resolution Copper will be awarded the land 60 days after the required environmental impact statement has been completed. This raises questions about whether a fair assessment can be completed when Resolution Copper has already been awarded the land for the proposed copper mine.

”The bill says that Congress has already decided that the land swap will take place. So we’ll do the land swap and then we’ll do NEPA,” [Jeffrey Altschul](#), president of the Society for American Archaeology, is quoted by Science magazine as saying in December.

The mine has the support of Arizona Reps. Paul Gosar and Ann Kirkpatrick, as well as Arizona Sens. John McCain and Jeff Flake. Originally introduced in 2005 by Arizona Rep. Rick Renzi, the Southeast Arizona Land Exchange has consistently faced opposition from the San Carlos Apache. Following the passage of the land swap policy rider in the NDAA 2015, Flake commented on the need to include the measure into the much larger NDAA rather than passing the bill on its own.

“It’s never good to see big packages with so many things in them — that’s what we want to get away from,” [Flake told the Huffington Post](#). “But it’s been very difficult to move individual pieces of legislation over the last few years.”

The passage of this particular piece of legislation had been “very difficult” partly because of the threats to Apache land, history and way of life, as well as environmental concerns.

Rudy was one of hundreds of supporters who joined the Apache Stronghold as they traveled to reservations across the country in an attempt to drum up support for their fight. The Stronghold stopped for ceremonies and rallies in cities across the country before finishing their journey [outside of the Capitol](#).



Native American Indians including Noel Altaha, left, of White Mountain Apache tribe, join Apache Stronghold activists in a rally to save Oak Flat, land near Superior, Ariz., sacred to Western Apache tribes, in front of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, Tuesday, July 22, 2015.

When the Stronghold attempted to meet with Rep. Gosar at his D.C. office the group was threatened with arrest by Capitol Police. As Vonda Cassadore, of Bylas, and other grandmothers with the Stronghold were forced to leave Gosar's office, [Censored News reports](#) Cassadore warned: "We'll remember this when Election Day comes around. Sacred land means more than money."

Speaking to MintPress, Cassadore emphasized that the land swap will take away her ability to teach her 8-year-old granddaughter how to cook traditional Apache food. "If Oak Flat turns into a mine and we lose the acorn," she said, "how am I going to show her how to do that?"

On July 21 and 22 the Apache Stronghold gathered outside the U.S. Capitol, where they sang songs, held prayer, and spoke to anyone who would listen to their plight.

"Today is our day. Today is our ceremony. We're not here looking at this Capitol like it's in charge of us," Wendsler Nosie, an Apache Stronghold organizer and tribal councilman, [told Reuters](#).

## **'They won't stop until the whole area is destroyed'**

The Oak Flat area holds particular significance among the San Carlos Apaches, as it is near the Apache Leap cliffs where Apaches jumped to their death to avoid capture by American troops in the 1870s. The Stronghold set up camp on the site in February, pledging not to leave until the deal is repealed — a pledge they continue to honor.

Even before the Apache Stronghold formed, locals were resistant to the proposed copper mine. In March 2013, the nearby town of [Superior voted unanimously](#) to oppose the land deal. "We cannot afford this deal or support it until Resolution Copper Mine (RCM) comes clean," said Soyla "Kiki" Peralta, a town council member, who cited concerns about water and the environment.

Also in 2013 the San Carlos Apache Tribe, Pascua Yaqui Tribe and Tohono O'odham Nation, along with 17 other Native American groups, sent a letter to Congress saying the deal tramples on the religious rights of Indigenous people.

Prior to the NDAA's passage in December, opponents began circulating [an online petition](#) calling on the Obama administration to repeal the deal. After receiving over 100,000 signatures the White House responded.

[Jodi Gillette](#), Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs, responded with a statement, which reads in part: "The public lands to be transferred have significant religious, cultural, historical, and archeological value to the San Carlos Apache Tribe and other tribes in the region. For these tribes, the area is sacred."

"This is appalling, this would not happen at any other holy place in the world,"

Gillette also quoted a statement from [Department of the Interior Secretary Sally Jewell](#), who said she was "profoundly disappointed with the Resolution Copper provision, which has no regard for lands considered sacred by nearby Indian tribes."

Jewell's statement continued, noting that Section 3003, which provides for the transfer of public lands to the private mining company, "short circuits the long-standing and fundamental practice of pursuing meaningful government-to-government consultation with the 566 federally recognized tribes with whom we have a unique legal and trust responsibility." It also puts the tribe's sacred land in "great jeopardy," she added.

Despite Gillette's assurances that the administration would "work with Rio Tinto (Resolution Copper's parent company) to determine what can be done to work with the tribes to preserve these sacred areas," Wendsler Nosie and the Apache Stronghold remain wary of Resolution Copper. Nosie told the [Arizona Daily Star](#) in December: "Oak Flat is where the creator, God, touched the earth for us. These are our ancestral home places."



This photo taken Monday, June 15, 2015, shows in the distance part of the Resolution Copper Mining land-swap project in Superior, Ariz.

Despite the resistance to the deal, Sen. McCain and Resolution Copper stand by their assessment that the deal will bring thousands of new jobs to the area and take the Apache's concerns into consideration.

After the NDAA passed [McCain issued a statement](#) on his website, arguing that “while a number of Arizona tribal governments raised concerns about the closure of a Forest Service campground called ‘Oak Flat,’ the bill guarantees that Native Americans can continue to access the campground for many years until the mining company needs to mine underneath it.”

“Passage of the legislation means that Resolution Copper can move forward with the development of this world-class ore body which will create approximately 3,700 jobs, generate over \$60 billion in economic impact and result in almost \$20 billion in state and federal tax payments,” project director [Andrew Taplin said in a statement](#) shared with MintPress in December.

And while the project is forecast to produce a billion pounds of copper annually, enough to satisfy one-quarter of U.S. demand, critics argue it's unclear how much of that would actually be used domestically.

Further, members of the Apache Stronghold say the history of Resolution Copper's parent company, Rio Tinto, does not offer much reason to trust their promises.

“We have seen what Rio Tinto did in past mines, once they start they won't stop until the whole area is destroyed,” Reddog Rudy, an Apache Stronghold supporter, told MintPress.

## **A history of environmental degradation and corruption**

As part of the land swap, Resolution Copper will be given unprecedented access to sacred Apache lands. Resolution Copper is a joint venture between Rio Tinto and BHP Billiton, formed specifically to develop and operate the copper mine near the Oak Flat campground in Superior, Arizona. With the launch of Resolution Copper, the multinational mining corporations face a new wave of scrutiny regarding their treatment of Indigenous populations and destruction of environments surrounding their mines.

Despite the job creation and economic factors at hand, critics point to past mining operations as proof that the company cannot keep its promises.





Acorns from the oak trees sacred to the Apache.

In September 2008, [The Guardian reported](#) that Norway's Ministry of Finance would sell off the \$780 million stake held in Rio Tinto by the Government Pension Fund, also known as the "oil fund." Kristin Halvorsen, the Norwegian finance minister, told The Guardian that Rio Tinto's involvement in a mining operation in Indonesia was problematic:

***"Exclusion of a company from the Fund reflects our unwillingness to run an unacceptable risk of contributing to grossly unethical conduct. The Council on Ethics has concluded that Rio Tinto is directly involved, through its participation in the Grasberg mine in Indonesia, in the severe environmental damage caused by that mining operation."***

The Grasberg mine is the largest gold mine in the world and the third-largest copper mine, and certainly among the most scrutinized. A November 2007 [study published by charity War on Want](#) claimed that Rio Tinto were involved in human rights and environmental abuses. In addition to "massive environmental destruction," the report states:

***"Serious human rights violations have occurred near the mine, and the companies have regularly been accused of complicity in them owing to their reliance on the military and police to provide security for company operations. ... Investigations in 2005 revealed that the Grasberg mine had paid Indonesian military and police officers nearly \$20 million over the previous seven years. Individual commanders had received tens of thousands of dollars, while hundreds of thousands of dollars went to the Police Mobile Brigade, a paramilitary force known for human rights abuses, as well as an Indonesian general accused of human rights abuses during Indonesia's occupation of East Timor."***

Rio Tinto responded to the report, stating: “There are many complex economic, social and environmental matters associated with mining ... We are satisfied that our principles and standards are setting new benchmarks for responsible mining practices.”

In 2010, the International Council on Mining and Metals released [“Good Practice Guide for Indigenous People and Mining,”](#) which states that mining companies should work with Indigenous peoples and ensure full respect for their rights. The Apache Stronghold are waiting to see if Resolution Copper’s parent companies will abide by the standards.

Meanwhile, some critics of the land deal also point to possible backroom deals by Arizona Sens. McCain and Flake. In particular, they’ve noted that Rio Tinto [contributed to McCain’s campaigns for the Senate.](#)

Flake first came into contact with Rio Tinto in the early 1990s while working for Rossing Uranium. [The National Journal reported in 2012:](#)

*“Between 1990 and 1991, Flake was a registered foreign agent for Rossing Uranium, a company which operates a mine in Namibia that is among the world’s largest suppliers of the nuclear fuel. He earned between \$5,000 and \$7,000 per month opening doors in the nation’s capital and promoting the firm.”*

Rio Tinto owns 69 percent of the Rossing mine. Speaking with [Democracy Now!](#) earlier in July, Wendsler Nosie, the Apache Stronghold organizer and tribal councilman, suggested Flake’s past lobbying efforts may have influenced the land exchange.

Noting Flake’s lobbyist past and the source of McCain’s campaign contributions, Nosie told Amy Goodman: “So, if people—if Americans can just backtrack, then you’ll see the ties that they [Resolution Copper and Rio Tinto] have with these two individuals.”

## **‘The war on who we are as human beings is happening day to day’**

Back at the Oak Flat campground on July 27, five members of the Apache Stronghold rested after their journey to Washington. None of these young men are from the San Carlos Apache Reservation, and none are of Apache descent, but they were each inspired by Wendsler Nosie and the Apache’s struggle.

“These are different times, with different tools, but it’s the same struggle since colonization and contact,” Anthony Sul, with the Ohlone Rumsen of California, told MintPress. Although Sul is not Apache, he says his people share the Apache’s deep connection to the Oak trees and acorns.

“I am here supporting because this has been continuing for a long time and there comes a time when we say we have had enough. This generation is finding our way. How do we let people know that we have had enough, that the Earth has had enough?”



The Apache Stronghold van carried activists across the country to Washington.

When the Apache Stronghold made it to Washington, they arrived in support of a bill recently introduced by Congressman Raúl Grijalva of Arizona, which would reverse the NDAA’s Section 3003 allowing for the land swap. When introducing the bipartisan [Save Oak Flat Act](#), [Grijalva said](#): “Congress shouldn’t be in the business of helping big corporations at others’ expense, and it certainly shouldn’t break faith with Native American communities.”

In a statement, Sierra Club Executive Director [Michael Brune called](#) the land deal “disappointing,” urging Congress to “immediately pass Congressman Grijalva’s bipartisan bill that reverses this terrible land swap and finally begin to honor their promises made to Native Americans.”





Young Native American activists from around the country are uniting to fight the government's forced transfer of sacred lands, drawing inspiration from well known Native activists like Russell Means and John Trudell.

Kooper Curley, of the Diné Nation, says the battle is far from over for Native Americans. Curley, a hip hop performer who goes by Indigenize, was leaving Oak Flat for Salt Lake City, Utah, to join the [Utah Tar Sands Resistance](#) in their fight against tar sands and tar shale mining. "The war is not over, the war on who we are as human beings is happening day to day," he told MintPress.

But as the Apache Stronghold's recent journey to Washington demonstrates, they are not alone in their fight. The Oak Flat campground was [recently named](#) one of America's 11 most endangered places by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Reddog Rudy, the Apache Stronghold supporter, says today's Indigenous struggle against colonization is "a spiritual movement that has had to counter the political movement that stole from us." Rudy is a member of the Denver chapter of the American Indian Movement, the 1960s activist group that brought Native American struggles to the forefront of American politics through radical actions such as occupying Alcatraz Island and battling federal agents at Wounded Knee.

"Those of us who grew up in AIM, we still have our connection to our uncles, Russell Means and John Trudell. We want to do as much as they have done," Rudy told MintPress. "They brought back the way to be proud of being Indian. They started to grow their hair long, and bring back the ceremonies. It was illegal to practice our spirituality until 1978."

As Resolution Copper prepares to take over the area surrounding the Oak Flat campground, the Apache Stronghold remain committed to protecting their history, their land, and their people against the still-lingering effects of colonization. For the Native American men, women and children who support the San Carlos Apache this struggle is all too familiar. For the warriors of the Apache Stronghold, the current events represent the unfolding of prophecy. Still, after 500 years of lies, theft, and murder, the community continues to draw strength from spirituality and prayer.

“Our prayer goes beyond Oak Flat to the universe, so we can find balance,” Rudy said.

“We want everyone to have clean water. The four-leggeds, the birds, the swimmers, the whales and the dolphins. We want all them to live. That’s what we pray for.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.mintpressnews.com/arizona-apache-continue-to-fight-bill-which-hands-sacred-native-american-land-to-mining-company/208194/>

## **Nicole Kidman reveals secret gesture she made to struggling young boy as part of Vogue outback shoot**

August 3, 2015



Two Australian icons ... Nicole Kidman poses in front of Uluru for Vogue. Styling by Christine Centenera. Picture: Will Davidson

**NICOLE Kidman has rekindled her love of the Australian outback in a stunning shoot for Vogue Australia’s marquee September issue.**

The red centre has been a compelling place for the Aussie Oscar winner since she made her first film, the 1983 family drama *Bush Christmas*, at age 15.

Kidman’s connection to the land was strengthened most recently when she filmed Baz Luhrmann’s romantic epic *Australia* in the Northern Territory in 2008.

Now she has returned to the outback to pose for authentic and stylish photographs with Uluru as the backdrop.

“I’m enraptured by it. I’ve always been drawn to the landscape, and I do think there’s something ... the energy and the light ... it’s just a very, very magical, special place,” Kidman told *Vogue*.

The photo shoot brought back warm memories of filming *Australia*, the most precious of which was when she swam in a waterhole believed by the local indigenous community to hold sacred fertility properties. After many years of trying to conceive with her husband Keith Urban, she finally fell pregnant with her daughter Sunday Rose at the age of 41 after swimming in the waterhole.

Kidman says it was so powerful that she believes some of Australia’s indigenous culture “really penetrated my family”.

While she has told the tale of Sunny’s conception many times, there is one story she has never revealed that came from the making of that movie, which furthered her intrinsic link to the culture of the land: that of the gift she gave a struggling Aboriginal boy.

The boy was an extra on *Australia* and he reached out to Kidman in the form of a letter after filming had wrapped.

“It was a beautiful letter, and basically he asked me to support him and help him get an education,” Kidman said.

“He was young, really young, but he wanted an education. And when a child does that, what do you do? I thought, wow, this is an amazing opportunity to help, so I was able to financially support him all the way through high school and he recently graduated.”



Nicole Kidman will appear on the cover of the September issue of *Vogue*. Styling by Christine Centenera. Picture: Will Davidson Source: *Vogue Australia*

The boy, who Kidman asked not be named to protect his privacy, is now a teenager.

“It’s so great, because he wouldn’t have had that opportunity, so I’m just so glad that he reached out like that,” she said.

Kidman paid for the boy to attend boarding school in Perth and he would occasionally stay with Kidman and Urban during school holidays.

When Kidman became pregnant and didn’t return to Australia as much, contact became less frequent, but she continued to pay for his education until his graduation.

“It was more like I was able to be that person from a distance, to be able to go: ‘Here is the financial ability to soar, to get what you need’,” Kidman said.

“Because I wasn’t in a position to offer emotional support — and if I’m going to be there I’m going to really be there — that would be more like fostering or adopting him, and that’s not what he was looking for. [The boy’s family] was just looking for financial support to get him through school. At first I was more emotionally involved, but then as he grew up and was a boy and took his own life by the horns ... he has other people, and other cultures, to be his emotional support.”

Kidman is passionate about advancing women’s and girls’ rights and empowerment and, while at Uluru, she was invited to meet with the women of the Mutitjulu community, who wanted to perform a special women’s ceremony for her and showcase the work they do with the Ngaanyatjarra, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara Women’s Council.

Kidman was joined by her mother Janelle and two of her daughters, Sunny and Fifi, in Uluru to experience the ceremony.

“It was special and I think we came back closer,” Kidman said of her mother. “It was one of those times that you can spend and do something special like that, you tend to move in to each other. We live in different countries and to have her be there and be part of it, I was so glad that she came.”

Tourism Australia managing director John O’Sullivan said he was delighted to see “one of Australia’s most internationally recognised exports” return to the red centre and once again play a starring role promoting Australia on the world stage.

“As photo shoots go, I doubt they come much better than getting to photograph one of the world’s most famous Hollywood actors against the unique backdrop of one of Australia’s most iconic landscapes,” Mr O’Sullivan said.

“The *Vogue* images are stunning and, just like those amazing shots last year of the young Royal couple enjoying Uluru, will be viewed by millions across the globe. It’s fabulous exposure for Uluru and for great inspiration for an Australian holiday.

“The images and video footage we’ve been given access to will be put to good use internationally, helping inspire more visits to Australia and this very special place.”

*Vogue Australia’s September issue is on sale on Monday, August 10.*

**Direct Link:** <http://www.news.com.au/entertainment/books-magazines/nicole-kidman-reveals-secret-gesture-she-made-to-struggling-young-boy-as-part-of-vogue-outback-shoot/story-fnk84xng-1227466460266>

## Local Native Americans trying to restore sacred beauty of Indian Heights Park

*Posted: Aug 01, 2015 5:57 PM MST*

By Mike Sullivan, Reporter



ROCHESTER, Minn. (KTTC) -- Indian Heights Park in Rochester has a long standing history in Native American culture, but over the years its reputation has become something much different. Now Native American Community members are trying to change the narrative.

"People picnicked up there, and I'm sure in those days there were a lot of trash and beer cans around," said Native American artist and educator Nakoma Volkman.

It's a far cry from what it means to the Dakota tribes.

"There may not be much up there to see now, but it was an ancient burial ground," said Volkman.

Over the years this sacred land has become anything but.

"After dark a park becomes a different environment in many cases," said Olmsted County Sheriff Kevin Torgerson, "Criminal Culture, criminal element, whatever you want to call it becomes the force here."

Now Native Americans like Nakoma Volkman are trying to bring it back.

"We have a big education effort to go on with the teachers in the schools, about what it is and let's take care of things," said Volkman.

That Education began Saturday morning.

"Bit by bit, I think we are starting to understand a bit more about the values of the Native Americans," said Rochester Mayor Ardeell Brede.

"I was aware of some of it, but being here today opened my eyes to how important this is," said Sheriff Torgerson.

The hope is other people will share in the Sheriff's revelation.

"You wouldn't bulldoze and build houses over Calvary Cemetery, so why would you do that here? Wow, that really struck me," said Sheriff Torgerson.

He also says many people who visit the park do so in a peaceful way. To help educate them, a pavilion may be placed by the parking lot to educate people coming to visit.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.kttc.com/story/29688220/2015/08/01/local-native-americans-trying-to-restore-sacred-beauty-of-indian-heights-park>

## **Analysis: Commerce Trumps Native Culture at National Museum of the American Indian**

[Lyle Jacobs](#)

8/2/15

First-time visitors to the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. may not find exactly what they are looking for. The museum's mission statement assures museumgoers that it is "committed to advancing knowledge and understanding of the Native cultures of the Western Hemisphere." But visitors say the museum can make it confusing to do just that.

"The layout of the museum is very confusing—so far all I've seen is a bunch of gift shops," says Preston Jones, a Navajo visiting from New Mexico.

Indeed, upon entering the museum, visitors immediately see a booth selling what appears to be indigenous jewelry and relics. The majority of the first floor is devoted to a large “marketplace” area where visitors can buy various souvenirs. “Frustrating—a bunch of t-shirts and patterns—I see nothing of culture; what are they going to do, give a tour of the gift shop?” says Jones.

One of the first informational displays a visitor sees is a large pillar inviting people to learn about treaties. However, a small display with the question “are treaties bad or good for American Indians?” features two large cartoons poking fun at the subject. While there is nothing wrong with a little humor, the fact that this is one of the first displays a visitor will see combined with the gift shops may suggest to visitors that the museum is putting merchandise sales first, and making light of a serious and often misunderstood topic.

Several people of all backgrounds near an exhibit on the Dakota War of 1862 agree that the museum can be confused in the stories it attempts to tell. “It’s unclear why all this happened, all the brutality,” says Detlef Reineke, visiting from Germany. His wife, Heidi, who is originally from Minnesota, echoes his statement.

“I’m skeptical if we are getting both sides of the story. My question, are both sides being portrayed accurately?”

Patrick Kipepassah, a Taos Pueblo member visiting the museum from New Mexico with his wife and young son, wonders the same. “It’s definitely not telling the whole story, but I see that everywhere, which can make me feel very upset and emotional,” said Kipepassah.

The museum would indeed benefit from better explanations of these important events. Jack Shuler, an English professor at Denison University who was visiting with his young family from Ohio, agrees that “there should be much more ‘hand-holding’ in these presentations because people often don’t understand what happened to the Native Americans.”

Many sections of the museum have this problem of being unclear in what they are trying to accomplish. In a theater shaped like a Sweat Lodge, complete with hi-def sweat rocks, a 13-minute film on the “contemporary life of the modern Native American” was particularly foggy; the film would introduce tribes with no explanation of them or their culture, spend a minute or so on them, and move on.

Different native languages were heard throughout the film, speaking about different cultural practices, but viewers did not hear any translations or explanations. Nearly a dozen young children in attendance were heard continually asking “what’s that?” or “what does this mean?” This youthful inquisition is reflective of the museum’s general inability to paint an accurate and clear portrayal of 567 federally recognized American Indian cultures.



*Lyle Jacobs, Oglala Lakota, wrote this piece for the newsroom immersion program for student journalists at the Native American Journalists Association's annual conference in Alexandria, Virginia. Lyle is a senior studying sociology at Duke University.*

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/08/02/analysis-commerce-trumps-native-culture-national-museum-american-indian-161208>

## Why so many people defend the Goshen Redskins mascot

[Stephanie Wang](#), [stephanie.wang@indystar.com](mailto:stephanie.wang@indystar.com) 8:15 a.m. EDT August 3, 2015



GOSHEN – She wanted to defend her school mascot, the Goshen Redskins, so beloved by many yet targeted for change.

In front of hundreds of people at a public meeting, the young woman spoke passionately into a microphone: “You took away the one thing that we had,” she said. “It’s the Goshen Redskins for a reason.”

With fierce pride, she whooped and patted her mouth, a stereotypical Native American call.

As the Goshen School Board neared a decision last week on the controversial mascot, defenders of the nickname turned out in force, emotional and adamant against the contemporary grain. Many also spoke up asking for a change.

Board members voted 5-2 to retire the culturally insensitive name and mascot on Jan. 1.

The issue has divided and roiled the city, shaking a small, tight-knit community built on generations of those who identified as Redskins.

“Way to ruin the city!” someone shouted on the way out of the meeting.

With national attention from the NFL controversy over the [Washington Redskins](#), there is plenty of talk about why the name is disparaging, invoking the bloody scalps of slaughtered Native Americans forced out as their lands were taken away.

But why, when some stood up to say *here's why this name hurts me*, did others in the audience grumble expletives under their breath?

Why did some mascot defenders insist there was only pride, and no derogatory intent, so the name should stand?

"I just think we lose objectivity when it's something we care about," said Ed Hirt, an Indiana University psychology professor.

Team allegiances, he said, can be core to identity — no different from ethnicity or religion. To change it is a violation, severing a link to the past.

Imagine, he said, how Baltimore felt when the Colts moved to Indianapolis.

Imagine if IU were to get rid of candy-striped pants.

And that loyalty can be blinding, Hirt said. Just look at the legions of New England Patriots' fans [defending quarterback Tom Brady](#) in DeflateGate.

In hours of debate over the Goshen mascot, defenders argued that not all Native Americans considered the name to be derogatory. They insisted that an unhappy minority should not be able to overrule a majority.

"It's a spit in my face," said one person, who countered those who found the name offensive by saying it was offensive to him that a change was being considered. "I'm probably going to cry."

Native Americans who felt discriminated against, one person argued, should "suck it up and deal with it."

The School Board ought to worry instead about raising graduation rates, some said, or spending the estimated \$7,000 to \$16,000 cost of changing the mascot in wiser ways.

"We want to keep it, so now we have to convince ourselves that it's the right thing to do," Hirt said.

But some in Goshen felt persuaded beyond their hometown loyalty. School Board President Catherine Cripe, who ultimately voted for the change, talked of how it resonated with her when Native Americans said, "We're not real human beings to you."

School Board member Jane Troup remembered visiting a Native American group and hearing a leader explain why the nickname was offensive to him.

Feeling ornery, she refused to use the euphemism “the R-word” and continued to say “Redskins” to him.

“Today, I feel guilty for having done that,” she said, “because I was not being respectful to him.”

Still, in the end, Troup was one of two who cast votes against retiring the name.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.indystar.com/story/news/education/2015/08/01/many-people-defend-goshen-redskins-mascot/30981095/>

## **Mandatory Native American Curriculum in the Cards for Oregon**

[Michelle Tirado](#)

8/3/15

A new American Indian/Alaska Native State Plan moves Oregon ever closer to making a Native American curriculum mandatory in all public school districts. When it happens, it will join a still way too short list of states, with neighboring Washington added to it this spring, to issue a similar directive.

The new two-year plan, developed over a nine-month period by the 26-member AI/AN Advisory Panel, which includes representatives from each of the state’s nine tribes, was adopted by Oregon’s State Board of Education in April. Under the plan, all 197 school districts will implement a “historically accurate, culturally embedded, place-based, contemporary, and developmentally appropriate AI/AN curriculum.” While ultimately it is up to Oregon’s legislature, the plan states that the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) will support and assist in the development of legislative language for a mandate in the 2017 session.

Under the previous plan, issued in 2006, school districts were “encouraged to implement AI/AN curriculum and instructional materials.” While some have, the information taught is often outdated or inaccurate. Tammie Hunt, education director for the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians and a member of the AI/AN Advisory Panel, said about a year and half ago, she learned that schools in the Medford 549c district, where some Cow Creek students are enrolled, were teaching information from 1963 sources. In the 1960s, many of Oregon’s tribes were terminated. “They did pull the curriculum. They finished teaching it at the end of this year, from what I understand. They were supposed to do something this summer to update it,” Hunt said.

A few school districts, however, have made a good effort, albeit recent, to get it right. Hunt pointed to Salem Kaiser, which just developed an interactive curriculum that incorporates direct input from all nine tribes. In June, Hunt and representatives from

other tribes spent the day in a classroom going through the curriculum as if they were the students.

Ramona Halcomb, education director for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and also a member of the AI/AN Advisory Panel, said Pendleton School District has come a long way. Not only did the district approach the Umatilla for assistance in developing a curriculum for a two-week Oregon Trail program, but teachers and administrators have attended cultural events, a few even participated in a sweat with Halcomb, and new teachers have orientation at the tribal museum.

“Ever since the boarding school heritage, developing trust and developing that time to connect with communities is what’s important and what’s so needed—and Pendleton does that extremely well,” Halcomb said.

Including the culturally relevant curriculum, the new plan contains 11 state educational objectives, ranging from increasing AI/AN attendance and graduation rates to meet or exceed state levels to districts recruiting a minimum of 5 percent AI/AN educators and ensuring that educators receive AI/AN responsive training at least once per year, to boost outcomes of Indian students. The plan contains strategies for each objective, though the finer details need to be worked out. “Now we are developing subcommittees that are taking each of the goals and developing action plans—the how this will actually unfold,” said ODE’s Advisor to Deputy State Superintendent on Indian Education April Campbell.

Undoubtedly, there will be challenges in meeting these objectives. Take the 5 percent AI/AN educator target. Halcomb called it a “lofty goal,” but with Native American students dropping out of Oregon public schools at a rate 6.8 percent (2013-2014)—the highest in the state—aiming high is better than aiming low. As Halcomb sees it, through collaboration with the tribes and other entities dedicated to increasing diversity in the education workforce, it is not an unachievable goal. For instance, she would love to see school districts matching tribal scholarships for students pursuing teaching careers.

They also need to brainstorm ways to promote teaching as a worthy profession to go into. Out of the 160 Cow Creek students currently receiving tribal scholarships, none are in teaching programs. “Going into teaching is really tough. You are so governed by rules and regulations,” she said.

Despite the challenges, Campbell is excited about the updated plan, which also provides for a full-time Indian education specialist. She said they took a look at what other states, such as Minnesota, Montana, and Washington, are doing and trying to learn from their successes.

“Our students are struggling, and so we need to do something for them,” Campbell said. “Our leadership recognized that. I think everyone is ready, ready to see something change for our students. It’s time. It’s overdue.”

Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/08/03/mandatory-native-american-curriculum-cards-oregon-161234>

## Indigenous Voices Are Needed to Make US a Better Democracy

[Mark Trahant](#)

8/3/15

It's long past time for Indian country to have a say in how the government of the United States runs. Why? Because this country cannot be the democracy it purports to be as long as indigenous people do not have a real voice in the political conversation.

So what would be fair? How many American Indians and Alaska Native representatives should be in Congress?

[A couple of years ago, Malia Villegas](#), director of the National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center, said population parity would mean at least two U.S. senators and seven members of the House of Representatives. But that's not going to happen in a [winner-take-all election](#) system because the small number of Native votes are spread across districts nationwide. ([For what it's worth](#): The U.S. is one of the last democracies in the world to continue electing people this way.)



Mark Trahant

Remember the entire premise of the U.S. political system is that tribes are governments. Tribes are [political entities enshrined in the Constitution](#). Yet, and this is huge, tribes are the only such political entity that does not include even minimal, structural representation in Congress.

Even before the Constitution, the Continental Congress made it possible for residents of the territory of Ohio to have a voice. On November 11, 1794, one [James White was seated](#) in the Third Congress as a Delegate. Congress hadn't even set the rules yet for what that meant so the first debate was, [according to the Congressional Research Service](#),

“a wide-ranging discussion on the House floor about the Delegate’s proper role” including whether or not such delegates should serve in the House or the Senate. White did end up in the House where his role was described as “no more than an Envoy to Congress” because he could not vote.

Since White at least one Delegate has served in every Congress except for the two years between 1797 and 1799. Today there are six [Delegates in Congress](#), representing Puerto Rico, Washington, D.C., Guam, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

This is where Indian country gets short-changed. The Navajo Nation, a geographic, political entity, is far larger and has more people than the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa or the Northern Mariana Islands. (Only 53,000 people live in the Northern Mariana Islands.) But Navajo is spread over three state lines and its population is not quite enough for a House seat electorally.

Members of Congress often talk about the importance of the treaty relationship with tribes and the government-to-government relationship. Yet they have ignored their own power to appoint delegates by legislation. This is an old problem.

More than a century ago, some tribes argued for congressional representation. [The Choctaw Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek of 1830](#) explicitly included a “Delegate to Congress.” (One of the Choctaw chiefs, [Mushulatubbee, had already run for Congress](#).)

The thing is Congress makes up its own rules for Delegates. It is not a Constitutional act. For example: The Delegate for the District of Columbia was originally created in 1871, forgotten a few years later, and then restored in 1971.

“Since the first Delegate was sent to Congress, the House has struggled with the role Delegates should play,” the Congressional Research Service noted. “Some Members, noting that the Constitution, in Article I, Section 2, requires that the House be made up of representatives ‘chosen every second Year by the People of the several States,’ have expressed concerns that allowing Delegates to have the same rights and responsibilities as Members would be unconstitutional. Because Delegates, by definition, do not represent states, members have on several occasions debated what rights such delegates should exercise in the House.”

But full authority or not, at least Delegates are there. Seated. At the table. Their very presence would be a reminder about the unique political status of tribal governments.

How could this work? Easy. Tribal nations with large populations should have a Delegate. And perhaps smaller tribes could band together by region or language and have a regional commissioner who would act as a Delegate. If population is the criteria, and perhaps it should be, the total ought to be seven.

It's true that American Indians and Alaska Natives can and should also run and win in general district elections. I write about that a lot and in my next post I will look at those districts where Native candidates have the best shot.

But there is a fundamental difference.

In a general election, our best politicians are coalition builders, witness a [Lt. Gov. Byron Mallott](#) in Alaska, or a [Sen. John McCoy in Washington](#), or Supt. [Denise Juneau in Montana](#). These leaders do good things and positively impact public policy by serving a broad constituency. They are elected by all the people.

But if Indian country sent Delegates to Congress, we would have representatives whose only job would be to represent Indian country. That's no different than what James White did in 1830. He was a Delegate charged with advocating for the territory of Ohio. That's exactly the type of representation that treaty tribes and their citizens deserve.

*Mark Trahant is an independent journalist and a member of The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. For up-to-the-minute posts, download the free [Trahant Reports app for your smart phone or tablet](#).*

*Read more at <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork.com/2015/08/03/indigenous-voices-are-needed-make-us-better-democracy-161270>*

## **\$5K grant goes to preserve Grass Dance**

David Murray, dmurray@greatfallsribune.com 5:32 p.m. MDT August 4, 2015



The Grass Dance is an important facet of nearly every powwow held by northern plains tribes in the western United States and Canada.



Traditionally performed only by male members of tribal warrior societies, today the Grass Dance is often organized as a competitive event, at which dancers can earn thousands of dollars in prize money.

However the Grass Dance once held a much deeper cultural meaning, forming only a single component of a broad tradition of rituals; preserved and enforced by tribal elders belonging to Grass Dance Societies. Being invited to perform the Grass Dance was not simply a matter of individual choice.

“You had to earn the privilege by working your way up in the Grass Dance Society — by deeds and how you carried yourself in your daily life,” said Raymond Gone, an enrolled member of the Gros Ventre tribe and tourism director for Discover Fort Belknap. “You had to be taught these things. You had to learn from example. It taught our young people the Indian values of respect, honor and trust. The traditional Grass Dance sat upon the fringe of being holy.”

According to Gone, the Gros Ventre tribe obtained the Grass Dance sometime between 1875 and 1880, but as time progressed the dance slowly began to morph into something less traditional and eventually disappeared. A small remnant of the traditional dance still shows up in modern-day powwows, but its actual source and influences have been lost.

A recent \$5,000 grant made by the Montana History Foundation aims to help the Gros Ventre and Assiniboiné people rediscover the origins of songs and ceremonies associated with the Grass Dance, and to record them for future generations.

“This project is a major undertaking and one that is critical to Montana’s American Indian heritage,” said Charlene Porsild, president of the Montana History Foundation. “We are so proud to be able to assist in this endeavor and can’t wait to see the results.”

According to Porsild, the Montana History Foundation was contacted in 2014 by Gone, who heads the Fort Belknap tribes’ history and tourism arm. After a lengthy and detailed application process, the foundation approved funding for a project to research and record songs and ceremonies associated with the Grass Dance Society.

One of the unique features of the project will have members of the Gros Ventre and Assiniboiné tribes of the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation visit and interview members of the Grass Dance Society of the Cree Tribe on the Rocky Boy Indian Reservation, where tribal members still practice the dance.

The Cree Tribe still has knowledge of the actual ceremony and songs that accompany the dance. To obtain the information from the Cree Grass Dance Society, Gros Ventre and Assiniboiné tribal members will travel to the Rocky Boy reservation and partake in customary offerings of tobacco, dry goods and a pipe offering with elders.

“The grant will help pay for the trip back and forth to the Rocky Boy Reservation and the regalia,” grant coordinator, Gena Ashmore, said. “It includes a spear, a spoon, a big drum with four beaded drum sticks, two eagle feather bustles, two beaded wands and a reed whistle. Those are the things that we’re going to be helping with to enable them to move forward with this.”

The project also includes the digital preservation of traditional songs associated with Grass Dance societies.

“There will be a DVD that they will share with the director of Indian studies at the Aaniiih Nakoda College at Fort Belknap Agency,” Ashmore said. “Our grant also requires them to share it with the Montana Memory Project at the Montana State Library in Helena — so this will be available for researchers, historians, students — they’ll all be able to access this once it is done.”

“Being able to work with other tribes to understand the origins of the Grass Dance is going to ensure that future generations have an understanding of its significance,” Gone said. “And this grant is going to help us achieve that.”

**Direct Link:** <http://www.greatfallsbtribune.com/story/news/local/2015/08/04/grant-goes-preserve-grass-dance/31134661/>

## **Lawsuit goes after Fort Worth-based backers of lending operation owned by Native American tribe**

By MATT VOLZ

Associated Press

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HELENA, Mont. — Two Vermont women suing over the online lending practices of a company owned by a Montana Native American tribe are now going after the company’s Texas backers.

Jessica Gingras and Angela Given filed new claims in U.S District Court in Vermont Tuesday saying that Fort Worth-based Think Finance Inc. and its subsidiaries conspired with the Chippewa Cree Tribe’s Plain Green LLC in a racketeering scheme designed to defraud poor people.

The women's lawsuit says Think Finance Inc. and its former president, Kenneth Rees, approached Chippewa Cree leaders in 2011 with a payday lending scheme that used the tribe's immunity from lawsuits to circumvent state laws that cap or regulate interest rates.

The Chippewa Cree have sovereign immunity, a doctrine that grants tribes the power of self-government and exempts them from state laws that infringe on that sovereignty. It also gives them immunity in many judicial proceedings.

Think Finance and its affiliated companies provided the customers, the technology and the access to money, while the tribe was only required to operate a small call center and change its laws to allow short-term lending, the lawsuit said, citing a sheet outlining terms between Think Finance and the tribe.

Think Finance and Rees tried to avoid liability by "falsely claiming that they only provided services to Plain Green, when in reality they created the whole enterprise and ran its operation through an assortment of subsidiaries and affiliates," the lawsuit read.

The tribe released a statement through its spokeswoman, Shelby DeMars, that said Plain Green's executive team retains full control over all aspects of the business. "This is a transparently desperate attempt to inject new life into a baseless lawsuit full of allegations that are not only false but are also disparaging to all members of the Chippewa Cree Tribe," the statement said.

Ninety-nine percent of the loans made by Plain Green were immediately sold to a Think Finance-affiliated company in the Cayman Islands, and the tribe received just 4 1/2 percent of the revenue from those loans, according to the term sheet.

Think Finance and Rees, who now leads a spin-off company of Think Finance called Elevate, both declined to comment on the lawsuit, which only tells one side of a legal dispute.

Gingras and Given are asking U.S. District Judge J. Garvan Murtha to certify a class-action lawsuit for thousands of people who borrowed money from Plain Green at annualized interest rates of up to 379 percent. The lawsuit says the company exploits and extorts people who need emergency cash and have no other borrowing options.

Besides racketeering, the women say Plain Green is violating multiple federal and state consumer and trade laws. They are asking Murtha to block the company from doing business and return the excessive interest collected from its customers.

Their original lawsuit, filed in May, named three leaders of Plain Green as defendants. The three men have asked the judge to dismiss the lawsuit, saying they are protected by sovereign immunity and that the dispute should be decided by arbitration.

The new lawsuit adds Rees, Think Finance and its affiliated companies, along with two venture capital firms the women claim provided funds for the lending operation.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.dallasnews.com/business/headlines/20150805-lawsuit-goes-after-fort-worth-backers-of-lending-operation-owned-by-native-american-tribe.ece>

## What if We Listened to Indigenous People?

**Slowly but surely, Seattle's non-Natives have started to acknowledge the stories of the people who lived here before them, and are making exciting new history in the process.**

By Kelton Sears Tue., Aug 4 2015 at 09:49PM

*For the 2015 edition of Best of Seattle, the Seattle Weekly staff looked back on the past year and selected the five innovations that we feel will do the most to make our city better. This is one of them. To read the rest of Seattle's Best Ideas, go [here](#).*

Indigenous Peoples' Day resolution author Matt Remle. Photo by Alex Garland

**W**hen I call Matt Remle, he asks me to hold on for a second.

“I’m doing homework with my boy; I just have to tell him he gets a free break for a minute,” he says, chuckling. Remle, a Lakota man and the Native American Liaison at Marysville-Pilchuck High School, is often in the midst of homework, whether he’s helping students or his children or doing it for his own edification. As a Seattle correspondent and editor for the indigenous online news outlet Last Real Indians, he often digs deep into history. He aims to make connections to the present day in an attempt to tell stories that span centuries instead of moments, he says. In his mind, learning and telling stories about one’s ancestors is a necessary pursuit.

It’s a view he sees slowly trickling into the mainstream here in Seattle. “I think non-Natives are looking for a different voice and a different perspective,” he says.

Later today, Remle will visit Seattle City Hall to start planning the 2015 Indigenous Peoples’ Day celebration, a very new Seattle holiday he was instrumental in creating. Last September, Remle wrote the resolution and led the campaign to replace Columbus Day in Seattle with Indigenous Peoples’ Day—a motion unanimously passed in October by the Seattle City Council. During the campaign, Remle weathered personal attacks and phone calls from outraged opponents who claimed replacing Columbus Day was “focusing on the negative” and “preposterous.” The most intense opposition came from local Italian-heritage groups.



*A drum circle gathered outside City Hall before the first hearing for the Indigenous Peoples' Day resolution. GIF by Kelton Sears*

During one of the initial September committee hearings on the resolution, Sons of Italy member Tony Anderson told the City Council, “I pray you observe the same courage Columbus did in that summer of 1492.”

The request was a curious one given the grisly history that Remle soon shared with the Council, which came from Columbus’ own journals.

The explorer’s records, along with the writings of the crew and the Spanish friar Bartolomé de las Casas who accompanied Columbus on that fateful voyage, detailed firsthand accounts of their brutal acts. Remle told of the enslavement, rape, torture, and genocide of the Arawak people they encountered in the summer of 1492. Beheadings of young boys “for fun”; lurid blow-by-blow tales of forced sex with 9- and 10-year-old girls, the casual day-to-day dismemberment of dozens of Arawak simply “to test the sharpness of their swords.” The list goes on. By the end of it, 80 percent of the Arawak people had been killed. These clearly were not the stories Anderson had heard.

He, like the rest of Americans who go to public school, was likely taught the cute rhyme most of us know: “In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.” The explorer met the “Indians,” “discovered” America, and brought back gold. He was a hero, the father of the great “New World.” As Anderson understood it, Columbus was courageous.

During Remle’s recitation of Columbus’ acts, one man at the committee hearing screamed, threw his hands up, and left the room. “That’s insulting! I’ve had it!” As the meeting adjourned, the same man cornered Remle in the council chambers and told him he should “get some education” and that his comments about Columbus were derogatory to Italians.

“When you question the prevailing narrative, people have this angry reaction,” Remle tells me. “For me, personally, when I started learning these histories that are swept under the rug and not taught, I was kind of pissed. I felt lied to. Maybe bringing the Native history in will open peoples’ eyes that there is another narrative out there.”

In the past year, people in Seattle, and in Washington at large, have also started to realize that, maybe, the stories they’ve heard about the places we live and the people that came before us aren’t the whole picture. Seattle’s historic passage of Indigenous Peoples’ Day

was a celebrated international victory, making headlines in Europe and Canada—but it was met with some skepticism. A recurring question: Isn't Columbus Day a trivial holiday anyways? Who cares?

If it actually was trivial, the passage of Indigenous Peoples' Day probably wouldn't have set off the wave of outraged and openly racist Internet comments, radio talk, and media coverage that it did. According to Tulalip Senator John McCoy, part of America's difficulty with confronting its colonial history is that it's ugly. Listening to indigenous stories is hard for non-Natives.

"A lot of the things that have happened to tribes, since European contact to today, are not pleasant," McCoy says. "A lot of history books only talk about how the 'bad' Indians fought the settlers trying to tame the Wild West. But the Indians had to protect their land, their resources, because these folks were actually invaders. They weren't explorers or pioneers, they were invading a country, a territory. Granted, there are some tribes that didn't do nice things. But I always say that when you teach history, you have to teach the good, the bad, and the ugly."

In 2005, McCoy, a member of the Tulalip tribe and the only Native in the Washington state senate, sponsored a bill mandating that Native history be taught in public schools. To his dismay, at the last minute, the legal language was changed from "mandatory" to "encouraged." It took him 10 years of educating his fellow senators to muster the votes for a mandatory tribal-history bill—which he finally achieved this March in the landmark SB5433 (passed 42-7), making Washington the only state in the union besides Montana to require such instruction.

"I have a fellow Democrat, I won't say who, that always fought me over tribal sovereignty," McCoy says. "I got up to give my floor speech, and about a third of the way through, because he didn't sit far from me, I actually heard him say 'Oh, now I understand.'"

In addition to authoring legislation, McCoy also helped develop "Since Time Immemorial," a free tribal-history curriculum with the help of Denny Hurtado, the now-retired director of Indian Education for the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Together, McCoy and Hurtado, who is of the Skokomish people, cover everything from the Coast Salish economies and governance systems before European contact and the early Indian boarding schools that forced cultural assimilation on tribal youth, through treaty-making, treaty-breaking, tribal sovereignty, and Indian relocation, all the way up to today's urban Native issues, including indigenous activists' increasingly vital role in environmental actions. In teaching Native history, the hope is that students will start to understand and recognize that there is also a Native present, that indigenous people aren't just mythic figures in a fuzzy "pilgrims and Indians" past, but active participants alongside non-Natives in the crucial stories we are still writing—stories that directly affect everybody.

The ShellNo protest on May 16 was one of the most visible, widely covered environmental actions in the Pacific Northwest in decades, a feat for an area that's long characterized itself as an aspiring ecotopia. The vivid pictures of the colorful kayaks rowing out to protest the imposing Shell Polar Pioneer rig set to drill in the Arctic captured the imagination of people from around the world who read headlines about "The Paddle in Seattle." But it was the juxtaposition of the assembled, mostly white environmental groups with the fleet of traditional wooden canoes of the Lummi and Duwamish that cut the most striking image—a powerful flotilla led by the area's original inhabitants.

"That's the way it should go," Duwamish Tribal Chair Cecile Hansen says. "If [environmental activists] are going to involve the Natives, they should be in the forefront."

Idle No More, the indigenous activist organization that led the flotilla, gave the ShellNo action the spiritual weight that made it so resonant. Indigenous involvement reframed the discussion from an abstract issue about climate change to a concrete discussion that indigenous people have been trying to start for 500 years: the ongoing pattern of colonization and destruction committed in the name of resource extraction.

To Idle No More's Washington state director Sweetwater Nannauck, the Tlingit/Haida/Tsimshian woman who organized the ShellNo action, it's not a coincidence that Shell's oil rig perched in the sacred Salish Sea was called "the Polar Pioneer." "I was like, really?" she says, laughing quietly. "That's what they named it? It continues the same old thing—another ship has come in. So that's why I say it's important for us to heal that, my work is as a healer. We're both active participants in healing, the colonized and the colonizers too. The thing people are starting to see is, the original colonizers have become colonized—now it's corporate colonization."

Idle No More has reinvigorated the fight for climate justice in the state by making this very obvious but historically overlooked connection—environmentalists and indigenous activists are essentially fighting the same fight. The problem is that environmentalists have long tokenized Natives in the discussion, painting them as mystical Earth people—archetypal symbols from an imagined past—rather than actively engaging with them as people who exist in the present. Examples abound, from the famous 1970s "Keep America Beautiful" PSA featuring the iconic "crying Indian" (who was portrayed by an Italian actor) to the frequent citation of a moving environmental speech given by Chief Seattle in 1854: a speech that, oddly enough, references trains that wouldn't be built until years later—perhaps because it was actually written in 1971 by a screenwriter from Texas.





*Sweetwater Nannauck at ShellNo. Photo by Alex Garland*

“A lot of the times, these organizations think allyship means ‘We’re going to organize everything, and we want you to send a couple of Natives to sing and dance and drum for us,’ ” Nannauck says. “That’s tokenism. I’m about authentically led Native action—we organize it. In the workshops I teach—which a lot of organizers like 350 Seattle, Rising Tide, Greenpeace, and Raging Grannies that participated in ShellNo have taken from me—I teach how to work with Native people, the history of colonization, and how that colonization continues to affect us today.”

“It was always very iffy for tribes to work with environmental organizations because these organizations were arrogant,” says Annette Klapstein, who participated in the ShellNo flotilla as part of the Seattle Raging Grannies. “They would tell tribes what to do, which didn’t go over very well. This new alliance, based on respect and understanding, is so important because these different groups’ goals are much the same, and we are so much more powerful together.”

In late October when the state held a hearing in Olympia to discuss the the impact that oil transport through the Northwest might have, Nannauck contacted the Nisqually, whose land would be most impacted, and organized a rally at the Capitol. After taking her Idle No More education workshops, in which Nannauck teaches non-Native activists how to respectfully work alongside Natives, organizers from the local environmental groups knew to contact the tribes first, asking if Idle No More had organized anything and if they could participate, rather than vice versa. The event was led with Native prayer and drumming that Nannauck and the tribes organized themselves, and Natives made the first testimonies at the rally, which eventually swelled to 350 people.

“I told Sweetwater this later,” Remle says. “ShellNo was one of the first actions of that size where I saw mainstream environmentalists take a back seat and let canoes and local tribes take the lead. It was pretty amazing to see.”

The most important component of Nannauck's Idle No More workshops is communicating why indigenous activism differs from non-Native activism. Yes, both are fighting for the same goal, but there is a discernible difference in approach. Nannauck doesn't even call what she does "activism." Nor does Remle. They call it "protecting the sacred." The ShellNo story wasn't the typical angry diatribe pointed at distant oil corporations. As Nannauck puts it, the story that the ShellNo action told was about humanity's obligation to protect the sacred Salish Sea.

"The work I'm doing is educating both Natives and non-Natives about how the cultural and spiritual work has much more of an impact, not only on the Earth, but because we need to heal ourselves," Nannauck says. "What people need to understand is that the Earth is just a reflection of us, and that what we do to the Earth, we do to ourselves too. I try to educate them about our traditional ways and how that spiritual foundation is what motivates us."

Nannauck ends her workshops by asking participants about their ancestors. Where did they come from? Did they benefit from the land grabs when they came to America? Were they also oppressed? If you go far back, were they colonized too? These are questions and stories non-Native audiences often haven't considered. It's hard to consider stories you didn't know existed.

"A lot of people start crying because they can feel it," Nannauck says. "Acknowledging that historical trauma, it's kind of like a spiritual revival. It's starting in the Northwest. I believe that's what's going on right now. I feel like what we're doing here, what we're starting here, could be replicated in other places. It's not all negative—it's about healing. It's about the power of our spirit and our connection."

**Direct Link:** <http://www.seattleweekly.com/home/960008-129/what-if-we-listened-to-indigenous>

## **11th Circuit rebuffs Native American inmates seeking to wear long hair in Alabama prisons**

Published August 06, 2015  
[Associated Press](#)

MONTGOMERY, Ala. – The 11th U.S Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled against Native American inmates fighting for the right to wear their hair long in Alabama prisons.

The court on Wednesday upheld an Alabama prison policy which states that male inmates must keep their hair cut short.

## ADVERTISEMENT

Inmates had told the court that long hair has deep religious significance for Native Americans, and they wanted to keep their hair unshorn because of their beliefs.

The Alabama prison system maintains long hair poses security, discipline and hygiene risks.

The appeals court says many well-run prisons see the benefit of allowing inmates to follow the grooming practices of their religion.

However, the judges say the Alabama prison system must make its own assessment on the benefits and risks.

**Direct Link:** <http://www.foxnews.com/us/2015/08/06/11th-circuit-rebuffs-native-american-inmates-seeking-to-wear-long-hair-in/>

## Court Rules Native American Symbol Does Not Contain A Religious Message



By [Alexander Rubinstein](#), Wed, August 5, 2015

A federal appeals court ruled on Aug. 4 that Oklahoma's standard license plate does not contain a religious message, as a lawsuit by a Bethany pastor claimed.

The license plate, which depicts an Apache warrior shooting an arrow into the sky is non-religious, the court ruled, rejecting the claim of St. Mark's United Methodist Church pastor, Keith Cressman, who said the image was an affront to his Christian beliefs.

The ruling from the 10th Circuit of U.S. Court of Appeals upheld a lower court's ruling in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, by rejecting the lawsuit.

The pastor's attorney said he was disappointed by the ruling and is considering an appeal, reports KOCO.

“Mr. Cressman’s claim fails because he cannot demonstrate that the Native American image is, in fact, speech to which he objects,” the court found.

“Throughout this litigation, the only reason Mr. Cressman has offered for objecting to the Native American image is what he views as its links to pantheistic Native American folklore,” said the court.

The image was inspired by Allan Houser’s “Sacred Rain Arrow” sculpture, which was featured at the Olympic Village during the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah. Houser, an Apache sculptor born in Oklahoma, was one of the most renowned sculptors of the 20th century.

The 10th Circuit ruled that a “reasonable observer” would not see the image on the plates as communicating the legend of the warrior who shot an arrow skyward to bring rain. “Those viewing the image would likely connect the image to Oklahoma’s Native American history and culture,” the court said, reports News OK.

“At least in the context of its mass reproduction on Oklahoma's standard vehicle license plate, the Native American image is not an exercise of self-expression entitled to pure-speech protection,” the court ruled.

Cressman said the image conveyed a message that there are multiple gods and that the arrow was an “intermediary for prayer.” He said that the religious symbolism was contrary to his Christian beliefs and he should not have to display it on his vehicle or purchase a more expensive specialty plate.

Chief counsel for the Tennessee-based Center for Religious Expression, Nate Kellum, who represented Cressman, said that the court’s ruling was a disappointment. “We believe the decision begs for further consideration.”

**Direct Link:** <https://www.opposingviews.com/i/religion/court-rules-native-american-symbol-does-not-contain-religious-message>